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ABSTRACT

This PLACE Sourcebook on the World of Work provides clients in employment counseling with information about occupations, the norms of the labor market, and sources that clients can consult to find additional information on the part of PLACE related to getting the job. For each employment-related topic in the corresponding Workbook (CE 031 885) there is a section in the Sourcebook that clients can read to analyze the nature of employment requirements for that topic. The Sourcebook can also be used by clients to find out what is meant by questions in the workbook to determine how they should be answered. It sets forth those skills or resources that must be obtained to overcome each employment problem. Topics covered include preliminary steps, initial preparation (personal appearance, personal information package, scheduling and recordkeeping, locating job prospects), making contact with employers (written applications, telephone inquiries and applications, personal visits), interview, and followup procedures. (YLB)

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PLACE

Guided steps to employment readiness

Sourcebook on the World of Work
Part C
Getting the Job

Occupational and Career Analysis and Development

Analyse et développement -- Professions et carrières

CE 031 886

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PLACE has been developed by Bruce Rosove of the Advanced Development Division, Occupational and Career Analysis and Development Branch, Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. This format has been developed based on findings from the use of two earlier editions of the material. The latter of these is available under the title PLACE II. Keira Hawkins collaborated on the preparation of this component of PLACE.

Ottawa, 1980

NOTE:

This is one in a series of PLACE publications. The full series includes:

PLACE Workbook, Parts A/B, Identifying Your Occupation/ Fitting the Requirements
PLACE Sourcebook, Parts A/B, Identifying Your Occupation/ Fitting the Requirements

PLACE Workbook, Part C, Getting the Job
PLACE Sourcebook, Part C, Getting the Job

PLACE Workbook, Part D, Doing Well on the Job
PLACE Sourcebook, Part D, Doing Well on the Job

PLACE Workbook, Part E, Personal Needs
PLACE Sourcebook, Part E, Personal Needs

PLACE Directory to Employment-Related Programs and Services

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Introduction

To get the job you want it is not enough to have the necessary skills and qualifications. You must also find and convince employers that you are the person who should be hired. Everyone who has ever looked for work knows just how difficult this process is. Like everything else, there are good and poor ways to hunt for a job.

This part of the SOURCEBOOK complements Part C of the PLACE, Getting the Job. By completing the wookbook, you will have identified the areas of weakness in your job search skills. The SOURCEBOOK, by describing and giving examples of each job search skill, should help you become more successful in getting a job.

HOW THIS SOURCEBOOK IS ORGANIZED

The book is divided into five chapters. The first deals with the decisions you must make before even starting to look for a job. The second chapter, Initial Preparation, talks about the preparations you should make before actually going out to pound the streets. In the third chapter, Making Contact with Employers, the three ways to introduce yourself to employers--in writing, by phone or in person-- will be described. The fourth chapter deals with the most important part of the search for work--the interview phase. Finally, the last chapter on follow-up explains how to find out the employer's decision and how to deal with job offers.

Chapter I / Preliminary Steps

"What kind of work are you looking for?" and "What are your qualifications for the job?" are the first two questions any employer will ask you.

If your answer to the first question is "I'll do anything," or "I'll take anything," you are off to a poor start. Neither statement is true. You are human-- you can't do everything. Nobody can. More than that, there are jobs you would refuse to do.

If your answer to the question about qualifications is "I'm not sure whether I'm qualified," you've lost the race at the very beginning. It's not up to the employer to figure out what you are qualified for; it is up to you.

(a) CHOOSING AN OCCUPATION

Before you begin looking for a job,, you must decide what type of work you would like to do. Canada Employment Centres offer programs for people like you who aren't quite sure what they want. These programs are called career exploration programs.

One good program is the Index to Canadian Occupations. With it, you start by choosing factors you would like in your future career and you list them on a summary sheet. Then you look through lists of occupations that contain the factors you would like. When you see an occupation that appeals to you, you write its name on your summary. You end by adding the scores for each occupation on your list. By doing this you will see which occupations meet most of your desires. In this way you can choose a suitable occupational goal.

If you would like help in choosing an occupational goal, ask a counsellor at the C.E.C. about the Index to Canadian Occupations or other career exploration programs.

(b) CHECKING YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

Once you have figured out what kind of work you would like to do, you must see whether you meet the occupational entry requirements. "Sure I can do that job," you may insist. But employers will expect you to prove that you can.

To show you are qualified, you must know what the requirements are and you must show that you have the necessary skills and knowledge. The first part of the PLACE package, called "Fitting the Requirements", is designed to help you to analyze your skills and experience in an organized way. Ask your C.E.C. counsellor for a copy of it.

Chapter II / Initial Preparation

"Where do I begin?" is the despairing cry of many an inexperienced job seeker. Happily, the answer is simple. You should begin by planning your job search campaign.

This chapter is devoted to the first step in the process--getting ready. It is divided into five successive steps. First, you should begin by preparing a work site and collecting the materials you will need. Second, you will gather the clothing and grooming aids necessary to present a suitable appearance at job interviews. Third, you should prepare a personal information package that includes documents such as a social insurance number and your resumé. Fourth, you should plan a schedule of job search activities and prepare record-keeping forms that will help you keep track of where you've been and where you are going. Finally, you will begin the search for work by locating job prospects.

This preparatory stage should not take more than one week, and it may take considerably less if you are already well organized. Typically, you would spend the first day preparing your work place, the second day preparing your clothes, your third day preparing your personal information package, and the last two days planning your schedule and researching job prospects. This is not a wasted week: it is time well spent. By the end of the week you will have eased yourself into the job search process in a systematic way.

(a) PREPARING A WORK SITE

If you have a hobby, you know how handy it is to have a place to keep things where you can leave them set up. If you have to pack everything away between sessions, you soon find that the sessions become rarer and rarer. It is just too much trouble. The same holds true in your job

search. So you should begin by finding a place where you can set up your things and leave them for a while.

LOCATION -- A PLACE OF YOUR OWN

Your most basic need is a handy, quiet, private place that you can use every day. During your job search you will spend a good deal of time reading, writing letters and talking on the telephone. These activities take thought and concentration. You can't do your best work with televisions or radios blaring in your ears, kids climbing over you or friends and neighbours dropping in and disturbing you. If there is nowhere in your home that is suitable, you should plan to use the public library.

THE EQUIPMENT YOU'LL NEED

Basically, you'll need a table or desk, a chair, a telephone and a place for your files - or a box will do. You'll also need the use of a typewriter. If at all possible, try to have both the telephone and typewriter at your work site. You can rent typewriters for $10 to $40 per month and it is money well spent. Employers prefer typewritten letters or resumés. If you expect to apply for any jobs in writing, try to get hold of a typewriter.

A useful piece of optional equipment is a tape recorder and tapes. If you don't have one, don't fret; but if you do you will find that it comes in handy for practising your interview techniques.

THE MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Office Supplies

In your job search, you'll be doing a lot of writing. Even if you don't plan to write letters of application, you'll need to take notes about your telephone conversations, prepare brief answers to interview questions, and keep track of your activities. You'll find you need the following office supplies:

- note paper and typing paper
- business size envelopes
- stamps
- pens, pencils, erasers
- tape or glue
- scissors
- stapler, staples, paper clips
- file folders

If you plan to do any typing, you'll also need a spare typewriter ribbon and carbon paper. You'll save yourself aggravation if you gather all these materials at the beginning. Nothing is more frustrating than sitting down to type a letter only to discover that you've run out of paper. If you get everything at the start you'll also save yourself time.

Record-Keeping Forms

To keep track of your activities you'll need record-keeping forms such as a daily calendar, a weekly schedule, separate file cards for each prospective job and a summary sheet for keeping track of the status of each of your job applications. These forms are described and sample copies are illustrated on pages 34 to 41 of this SOURCEBOOK. Look them over, decide which ones you'll need and make several copies of each.

Resource Materials

Because you will use them so often, you should collect the following resource materials at the beginning of your job search. First, get a dictionary -- everyone has words they can't spell. Another useful book is a thesaurus which lists synonyms (words that mean the same) and antonyms (words that mean the opposite) of many common words. (The thesaurus can help you make your letters more interesting.) Finally, you should borrow or buy a basic grammar book or a guide to writing business letters.

In addition, you will need research tools for finding job openings and identifying possible employers. Two rich resources that you probably have right in your home are your local telephone directory and a daily newspaper. Take these resources to your work site.

CHECKLIST--PREPARING YOUR WORK SITE

Listed below are all the items you need for a well prepared work place. Use it as a handy reminder. Once you have gathered the item at your work site, check it off on your list.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

___ TABLE OR DESK
___ CHAIR
___ TELEPHONE
___ TYPEWRITER
___ FILE CABINET (OR BOX)
___ TAPE RECORDER (optional)

OFFICE SUPPLIES

___ WRITING, TYPING AND CARBON PAPER
___ BUSINESS SIZE ENVELOPES
___ FILE FOLDERS
___ STAMPS
___ PENS AND PENCILS
___ TYPEWRITER RIBBONS
___ FILE CARDS
___ ERASERS OR CORRECTING FLUID

(Office Supplies, continued)

___ TAPE OR GLUE
___ SCISSORS
___ STAPLER AND STAPLES
___ PAPER CLIPS

RECORD-KEEPING FORMS

___ DAILY CALENDAR
___ WEEKLY SCHEDULE
___ PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER FILE CARDS
___ SUMMARY OF JOB APPLICATIONS

RESOURCE MATERIALS

___ DICTIONARY
___ THESAURUS
___ GRAMMAR TEXT OR BUSINESS LETTER STYLE GUIDE
___ LOCAL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
___ DAILY NEWSPAPER

(b) PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Few jobs are won solely on the basis of personal appearance, but many are lost purely on this question. It is unlikely that you will look your best at an interview if you give no thought to the issue until half an hour before you are supposed to be there. No matter what job you're applying for, your personal hygiene must be perfect. Clean hair, clean body, freshly shaved or subtly made-up face, clean hands and nails are all essential. The type of clothing you will wear is more dependent upon the kind of job you are looking for. But whatever you wear, it must be clean, well-pressed and in good condition.

PREPARING YOUR CLOTHES

You should prepare a set of clothes to wear at interviews as an initial step in your job hunting program. This will save you from last minute crises. You should begin by figuring out what type of clothing would be suitable. Garage mechanics don't go to interviews in three-piece tailored suits and bankers don't go in jeans. If you don't know what is appropriate, take a trip down to a local company that employs people in your occupational field. Take a look at what the employees are wearing. The clothing you wear to an interview should be similar in style but a bit more dressy.

Once you have decided what would be suitable, take a look through your wardrobe to see what you have. Your purpose is to gather one complete outfit to wear to interviews. If you are lacking the necessary items, go out and buy them right away. Make sure that the clothes you have selected are in good repair, mend anything that needs mending, have the outfit dry cleaned or freshly washed and pressed, and hang it carefully in your closet for use the day you need it.

After every wearing, check for new rips, make any necessary repairs, wash and press the garment, and put it away in your closet. If you follow this procedure you will never need to fuss about your appearance at the last minute.

To deal with personal hygiene, set up a regular schedule for your grooming. Have a bath or shower every day, shave regularly and make sure your hair is clean every day. Then if you are asked to appear in an hour for an interview, a brief touch-up will be all you need.

CHECKLIST--PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL APPEARANCE

CLOTHING REQUIRED	ACCESSORIES REQUIRE
___ TROUSERS OR SKIRT	___ SHOES
___ JACKET	___ BOOTS
___ SHIRT	___ GLOVES
___ SOCKS OR STOCKINGS	___ BRIEFACSE AND/OR
___ UNDERWEAR	HANDBAG
___ TIE OR SCARF	___ UMBRELLA
___ OVERCOAT	___ JEWELLERY

GROOMING REQUIRED

___ DAILY BATH OR SHOWER
___ DAILY SHAVE
___ HAIR--CLEAN, STYLES, BRUSHED
___ HANDS--CLEAN, NAILS CLEAN AND TRIMMED
___ TEETH CLEAN AND BREATH FRESH
___ MAKE-UP-- SUBDUED AND CAREFULLY APPLIED
___ PERFUME OR AFTERSHAVE-- LIGHTLY SCENTED
___ DEODORANT

(c) PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION PACKAGE

To prove to employers that you are qualified for the job, you must give them facts about yourself. Therefore, as the third step in your initial preparation, you must assemble a package of documents that tell your story. Doing this at the beginning will help you to organize your thoughts and save you time in the long run. Rather than having to rush around before each interview trying to find the materials you will need, you can just pull out your completed file and go.

Your personal information package is an up-to-date summary of your qualifications for work. It contains documents that show who you are (such as your social insurance number and birth certificate), what you have done (work samples and references) and your educational background (transcripts, etc.). As well, it contains your resumé which highlights your school and work history.

There are two parts to preparing your package: gathering and copying your documents and preparing and copying your resumé.

(i) PREPARING YOUR DOCUMENTS

Your first step is to find the documents you will need. There are three types of documents.

Personal Identification

These materials include your birth certificate, your citizenship papers or work permit, and your social insurance number (S.I.N.). If

you don't have an S.I.N., you should apply for one right away because you cannot work without one. Ask your counsellor for the application forms.

Work Experience

One good way to show your qualifications is to bring samples of your work to the interview. This is much easier in some occupations than in others because in some you produce tangible products while in others you don't. If you have any work samples that are reasonably small, collect them. As well, if you received any award or honours at work, such as a "Secretary of the Year" award, include it in your package. In addition, you should have letters of reference or a list of people willing to act as references. Make sure, when you prepare your list, that you have received permission from the people whose names you are using. Think carefully about who to include. The people you list should be willing to say positive things about you and your work.

Educational Records

The items you need for this section are transcripts that list the courses you have taken and the grades you received, as well as copies of your degrees, diplomas or certificates. Also, if you won any academic honours, be sure to include the proofs.

Arrange the documents on sheets of paper labelled with the three categories described above. Finally, you should have the pages professionally photocopied on a good quality machine and you should collate your file. Then, when you go to interviews, you can show the employer the material and leave a copy if requested to do so.

CHECKLIST--YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION PACKAGE

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION	WORK EXPERIENCE	EDUCATIONAL RECORDS
___ BIRTH CERTIFICATE	___ WORK SAMPLES	___ TRANSCRIPTS OF GRADES
___ PROOF OF CITIZEN-SHIP	___ HONOURS OR CITATIONS	___ DIPLOMAS OR CERTIFICATES
___ S.I.N. NUMBER	___ REFERENCES	___ ACADEMIC HONOURS

(ii) PREPARING YOUR RESUME

Your resumé is the most important part of your personal information package. It is a brief summary of your background and experience that stresses your successes. Its major purpose is to convince the employer to give you an interview.

Who Needs A Resumé?

Practically everyone who is looking for work will find the resumé useful. Resumés are always needed by people who are seeking work in managerial, administrative, professional or technical occupations. People in sales, service, clerical or skilled trades occupations will also improve their chances of getting a good job if they use a resumé. Resumés are needed least by people applying for semi-skilled or unskilled jobs.

Uses Of The Resumé

Your resumé is used to provide a large number of employers with information about your qualifications. When you reply to 'Help Wanted' ads, you should enclose a copy. Give copies to your personal contacts, such as friends, relatives, etc., so that they can show the resumé to people who are hiring. You should send it with letters of inquiry about possible job openings. When you go to employment agencies, leave a copy with them. You will also find that it comes in handy when completing application forms or preparing for and attending interviews.

Contents Of The Resumé

Your resumé should contain a brief, selective account of your work-related history. It always has sections on personal information, work experience, education, skills, interests and references. It may contain sections on military experience, volunteer and community activities, awards and honours, publications, professional organization memberships, and a statement about your career goals.

Your resumé should be short, no more than one or two pages long. Unless you have a most unusual background, you will not need more space than this. The resumé is not a complete history of your life; it is a selected listing of your activities. Resumé readers want to get a quick idea of what you have to offer; they won't read pages and

pages of detail. Therefore, in each section, you must choose your key experiences.

ORGANIZING YOUR RESUMÉ

In organizing your resumé, you will want to group the facts that you want to tell about yourself into sections or blocks of related information. The sections should be ordered so that your strongest qualifications come before your weaker ones. Thus, if you have just recently finished school, you should list your educational background first. If you have some work experience, you should put that section first. Within each section the same rule holds true. For example, you should list your college or university education before your high school education and you should list your most relevant work experience first. The reason for ordering your information like this is that readers tend to read the first sentence of a paragraph more carefully than the later sentences.

Information in the two key sections, education and work history, can be organized in two main ways. Either you can list the facts chronologically starting with the most recent and ending with the oldest, or you can group the information functionally by choosing a category such as administrative experience and listing all the activities related to that topic under the heading. A chronological listing, which is the most common, works best when you have an unbroken history of school or work. The functional listing is best used if you have worked at many short-term jobs, if you have been out of the work force for a while, or if your most recent employment is not related to what you plan to end up doing.

Organizing Your Resumé--Examples

Chronological Structure

RESUME OF JOHN Q. PUBLIC

Personal Information

Name: John Q. Public
Address: 1 Sleepy Hollow
Anytown, Prov.

Phone: 222-2222
SIN: 111-111-111

Education:

Sept. 1976-
June 1978

Anytown Community College
111 Wisdom Road,
Anytown, Prov.
- Diploma in Business Technology
Major in Marketing

Sept. 1971-
June 1976

Smarty High School
15 Boardom Blvd.
Anytown, Prov.
- Senior Matriculation Academic Program

Work Experience:

June 1977-
Sept. 1977

General Office Clerk
XYZ Company,
30 Industrial Ave.,
Anytown, Prov.
- Duties: Processing purchase orders, typing, filing, mail distribution and processing.

Interests:

Drawing and painting; Advertising manager of community newspaper; raquet games.

References:

Available on request.

Organizing Your Resumé--Examples

Functional Structure

RESUME OF JANE DOE

Personal Information

Name:	Jane Doe	Phone:	333-3333
Address:	10 Busy Street Anytown, Prov.	SIN:	666-666-666

Work Experience:

CUSTOMER SERVICE	- helped clients choose suitable gifts in a hospital gift shop, as a volunteer. - as a sales clerk, fitted customers of all ages in a family shoe store - as a service station attendant, pumped gas and sold related products
ADVERTISING ACTIVITIES	- prepared advertising copy for community newspaper - arranged advertising and sales displays for gift shop and shoe store - co-ordinated advertising for fund-raising fashion show

Education:

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS	Have completed community college courses in sales writing, advertising and marketing.

Interests:
Writing, reading, sewing, fashion design.

References:
Available on request.

THE SECTIONS OF A RESUMÉ

In order to help you decide what to include in your resumé and how to organize the information in each section, the following pages will outline the types of information usually included. As well, examples of layouts will be shown.

Personal Information

SAMPLE LAYOUT OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

RESUME OF _____(YOUR NAME)_____

(Required Information)	(Optional Information)
Name: _____	Citizenship: _____
Address: _____	SIN Number: _____
_____	Birthdate: _____
Telephone:	Height: _____ Weight: _____
Home: _____	Health: _____
Business: _____	

1. REQUIRED INFORMATION

Title

Your resumé should always start with a title. The most obvious title is "Resumé of ...". Other titles you could use include "Personal Data Sheet of ..." and "Curriculum Vitae".

Name

Give your full name, including middle names.

Address

The address you give should be your mailing address, even if it's a temporary one; it's easier to have the post office forward your mail if you've moved than to collect your mail from a permanent address in another location.

Telephone

Give a number where you can be reached during business hours. If you do not expect to be home, ask someone you are sure will be in whether they would be willing to take messages for you and allow you to use their number.

2. OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Citizenship

Indicate your status, e.g. Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

Social Insurance Number

If you are hired, you will be required to give your S.I.N. to your employer. Otherwise it's up to you whether to give it or not.

Birthdate

If you wish, you may give your birthdate or age.

Height and Weight

For a very small number of jobs, such as police occupations and some transportation occupations, this information is required. Otherwise, it usually isn't necessary to specify.

Health

If you have a physical disability that may cause you difficulty at work you may choose to mention it. Such information, though, is often used to disqualify people, and it may be better to discuss it at the interview rather than the resumé. If, however, your health is excellent, it can't hurt to say so.

Educational Background

EDUCATION:

Dates Attended	Name and Address of educational institution	Name of programme or major and minor	Degree, diploma or certificate name

- Special achievements, honours or awards, lists of relevant courses, grade point average

Sept. 1973 to June 1978	Smarty High School 15 Boar Blvd. Anytown, Prov.	Academic programme	Senior marticulation

Class Rep. in Student Council; Member of Bowling team in final year; Business and Math courses; average in final year was "B".

When describing your education, you should specify: the name of the degree, diploma or certificate you received, the name and address of the institution, the name of the program or major field that you specialized in, and the dates you attended the institution. As well,

you should list any special achievements or awards that prove you to have been an active or successful student.

The order in which you mention these things depends upon your situation. If, for example, you did not complete the program, you should not begin with the degree or diploma name. Rather, you might start with the program area in which you were studying and end with the degree/diploma name and, in brackets, the word "Incomplete".

If you pursued your education through part-time studies, you might give only the date of graduation, and indicate in the section on your achievements that you completed the program through part-time evening study.

If you did not do outstandingly well, you might choose instead to list the major courses you took or emphasize your extra-curricular activities. Remember, your purpose in organizing the information is to focus attention on your successes rather than your failures. Always keep this in mind as you focus.

If you are using a chronological approach, you should list your last educational experience first and work backwards. If you have decided to try a functional approach, start by choosing a subject area, and list all related education and experience under that heading.

Work Experience

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING

WORK HISTORY:

Jan. 197_ POSITION NAME OR TITLE
to Company Name
May 197_ Company Address

--List of Major Duties

--_____
_____
--_____
_____

This section should always provide the following information about each job: the dates you worked, the name of your position, the name and address of the organization, and a brief list of your major duties or responsibilities. You can also include information about your major achievements, the name of your immediate supervisor and his/her position title, and a telephone number.

The most difficult part of this section to write is the list of work duties. It is, however, the most important. It is on the basis of the information you provide here that the reader will decide whether or not to interview you. You should list the most important activity first and the rest in descending order of importance. The description should be short and it is best if it starts with an action verb. A listing in point form is a good attention-getter.

FUNCTIONAL LISTING

SAMPLE LAYOUT

WORK EXPERIENCE:

NAME OF ACTIVITY: -- role held and description of activity
-- role held and description of activity
-- role held and description of activity
(Your examples must show that you can do the job and may be drawn from volunteer work, hobbies, work in the home, various paid jobs that you have held, etc. You should order them so that the first example is the strongest.)

If you use the functional approach it is not necessary to provide the names of the organizations for which you have worked or the dates that you worked. Rather, in the description of each activity, you can indicate generally the source of your experience (for example, in a shoe store, rather than specifying the name and address of the store. Be prepared, however, to provide more detailed information about the store at the interview).

Preparing a good functional resumé takes time and thought. First, you must choose the categories of activities carefully. They should relate to the kind of work for which you are looking. You must then write the examples and descriptions to show clearly

how the example illustrates experience in the activity you mentioned.

Skills and Interests

SKILLS AND INTERESTS:

Work-Related Skills--machines, equipment or tools you can operate.
--languages you can speak, read or write

Hobbies and interests--a brief list of your major leisure activities.

Community activities--a list of the community or voluntary organizations in which you participate.

You can use this section to provide further details about your work skills. This is useful if you have skills in areas that weren't mentioned as part of your education or work experience.

By listing your hobbies and community activities you can give the prospective employer a more rounded picture of yourself. However, be selective. If you spend most evenings watching television, don't say so. If this is your only activity, you should leave out this section; it will only hurt your chances for employment to include it.

References

REFERENCES

References are available on request.

Ms. E.X. Employer	Mr. M.Y. Pastor	Prof. Goodheart
Position Name	Position Name	Position Name
Company Name	Organization Name	Institution Name
Company Address	Street Address	Street Address
Phone Number	Phone Number	Phone Number

It is usually wisest to prepare a separate list of names and phone numbers of references that you supply only if asked to in an interview or on application forms. This ensures that your references are not harried needlessly by employers who are not seriously considering your application.

It is customary to provide the names of three references. People to include are former employers, teachers or professional contacts such as your minister, priest or rabbi, your doctor, etc. It is not good policy to list family members or friends. Prospective employers want to discuss your work habits; therefore, the people whom you list as references should be in a position to do so.

Before you list anyone as a reference, be sure to get his or her permission. Otherwise the person may be caught off guard, be unable to provide the necessary details or sound rather negative. Since a negative reference can destroy your chances for a job, you would be wise to treat them courteously.

Other Sections

Many people have additional qualifications or areas of experience that they feel will strengthen their resumé. Examples include:

1. MILITARY EXPERIENCE You should indicate the dates of your service, your position, your principal duties, your military status and the reason for discharge.

2. PUBLICATIONS You should provide full publication details.

3. MEMBERSHIPS If it appears relevant, you can list your memberships in any professional associations. If you hold any office in the associations, list it also.

4. AWARDS AND HONNOURS Provide the name of the award, the date and the awarding body.

5. CAREER GOALS Many people like to indicate, early in their resumé, their long-term and short-term career objectives. If you decide to include this heading, take care that you don't define your goals too narrowly.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PREPARING YOUR RESUMÉ

Gathering Your Materials

Your resumé is based on facts about your life. It is easy to forget important information unless you begin by collecting documents that

remind you of past events. The materials you will need are:

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION PACKAGE
You should have already prepared a file that includes copies of personal data such as your birth certificate, social insurance number and your citizenship papers; educational background such as transcripts, copies of degrees, diplomas, etc.; and work experience such as work samples and letters of reference. You will use this information in preparing your resumé.

COPIES OF PREVIOUS RESUMÉS
Any resumés you prepared in previous job searches are helpful source materials because they will remind you about past experiences.

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION
Since the kind of language you use and the description of duties you have performed is an important aspect of your resumé, it is helpful to use guidance materials that describe your occupation as a basis of describing your past experience. The major work duties and working conditions of most Canadian occupations have been defined in the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations. This two-volume reference book is available in most public libraries and in CECs. Decide which occupations you need information about (for example, the occupations you have previously worked in or the occupation you have chosen as your career goal). Ask your CEC counsellor to help you find and copy the occupational information about these occupations, if you haven't already done so as the first part of PLACE.

Selecting The Information You Will Use

It has been stressed that your resumé is a selected account of your past experiences. To help you decide which information to include the following form is provided. Complete all parts of your copy of this form.

INVENTORY OF PAST EXPERIENCES

Personal Information:

(Required Information)

Full Name: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)
Present Address:
_____
_____
Telephone: (Where you can be reached during the day)
Home: _____
Office: _____

(Optional Information)

SIN Number: _____
Citizenship: _____
Birthdate: _____
Height: _____ Weight: _____
Health: _____

_____

Career Goals:
Short-term occupational goal _____
Long-term career goal: _____
_____

Skills and Interests:
Work Related Skills:
Machines, Equipment Operated: _____
_____
Languages spoken, and written: _____
Clerical, etc. skills: _____
Volunteer or community activities:
Names of Groups: _____
_____
Offices Held: _____
_____
Personal Interests:
Hobbies: _____
Sports: _____
Interests: _____
_____

Professional Association Memberships:
Name of Body: _____
Positions Held: _____
Name of Body: _____
Positions Held: _____
_____

Publications:
Title: _____
Publisher: _____
Date of Publication: _____
Title: _____
Publisher: _____
Date of Publication: _____
Title: _____
Publisher: _____
Date of Publication: _____
_____

Military Experience:
Dates of Service: _____ to _____ Reason for
Branch of Service: _____ discharge: _____
Rank at Discharge: _____ Reserve Status: _____
Duties or activities: _____
_____
_____

Educational Background:
Dates Attended: From _____ to _____
Name of Institution: _____
Institution Address: _____
_____
Program Name: _____
Degree/Diploma/
Cert. Received: _____
Relevant _____ Final Standing: _____
Courses: _____ Scholarships/
_____ Awards: _____
_____ _____
_____ Achievements: _____
_____ _____
_____ Activities: _____
_____ _____

Dates Attended: From _____ to _____
Name of Institution: _____
Institution Address: _____
_____

Program Name: _____
Degree/Diploma/
Cert. Received: _____ Final Standing: _____
Relevant _____ Scholarships/
Courses: _____ Awards: _____
_____ _____
_____ Achievements: _____
_____ _____
_____ Activities: _____
_____ _____

Work Experience: (Chronological format)

1. Dates Worked: From _____ to _____
   Position Name: _____
   Name of Employer: _____
   Employer's Address: _____
   _____
   Supervisor's Name: _____
   Position Title: _____ Telephone: _____
   Earnings: Start $_____per _____; Finish $_____per _____

Major work duties (for help use occupational descriptions)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Awards or achievements: _____
_____
_____

2. Dates Worked: From _____ to _____
   Position Name: _____
   Name of Employer: _____
   Address of Employer: _____
   _____
   Supervisor's Name: _____
   Position Title: _____ Telephone: _____
   Earnings: Start $_____ per _____ Finish $_____ per _____

_____

Major work duties (for help use occupational descriptions)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Awards or achievements: _____
_____
_____

Work Experience: (Functional format)

Name of Skill Area: _____

Examples and descriptions.

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____
3. _____
_____
4. _____
_____

Awards or achievements: _____
_____
_____

Work Experience: (Functional format) (cont'd)

Name of Skill Area: _____

Examples and Descriptions:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

Awards or achievements: _____

_____

_____

(If you need more space for any of the above information, use a separate sheet of paper.)

Preparing A Written Draft

1. SELECTING AND ORDERING YOUR SECTIONS:

By rereading your answers on the questionnaire, you should be able to figure out which sections are relevant and your areas of greatest strength. Your purpose is to structure your resumé so that the most relevant aspects of your background appear first. Therefore, you must choose the order in which the sections will appear on your resumé. The left-hand column below shows a typical ordering of section topics. List the order that is most suitable for you in the right-hand column.

TYPICAL ORDER OF SECTIONS	YOUR SECTION ORDER
1. Personal Information	1. Personal Information
2. Career Goals	2. _____
3. Education	3. _____
4. Work Experience	4. _____
5. Publications	5. _____
6. Memberships	6. _____
7. Military Experience	7. _____
8. Skills and Interests	8. _____
9. References (Usually listed last)	9. _____

2. DECIDING ON CONTENT:

In the previous exercise you listed a great deal of information about each of your experiences. Reread each section and underline the information you will include in your resumé. This will include the basic information that identified what you've done, such as your position title, the names and addresses of employers or educational institutions, and the important dates. As well, you should underline the information that is related to the occupation in which you are interested and the items that show your successes. For example, if your educational program is not related to the job for which you are looking, there is no need to list your courses. If you did particularly well at school (B average or better), you should list your final average. If you did poorly, omit the information.

3. CHOOSING A FORMAT:

The appearance or layout of your resumé is extremely important. Spacing, use of headings, use of capitals, and underlining should be consistent. The most important information should catch the reader's eye. Blocks of related information should appear together and there should be enough white space on the page so that it doesn't appear cramped or difficult to read. At the same time, your material should be arranged so that the resumé will not be longer than two typed pages.

The amount of information you plan to include will affect your choice of format. Some formats allow you to get a great deal of information in a small space, others permit you to expand a small amount of information to fill an entire page. To help you select a format that suits your content, four examples have been provided on the following page.

4. WRITING YOUR DRAFT:

Following the format you have chosen, write out the information you have selected, ordering your sections as you decided in step one. Pay particular attention to your language; it should be crisp, precise, active and clear. If there is a technical language appropriate to your area, use it. A point form description of your activities is usually more effective than an entire sentence. Pay particular attention to your spelling and grammar. Mistakes of this kind can negate the impression you are trying to create.

FOUR EXAMPLES OF LAYOUT

Resumé of . . . . . .
Personal Information:

Education:
Dates Attended — Name of School, Address, Program Name, Diploma Awarded, --Facts and Achievements

Work Experience:
Dates Worked — Position Name, Employer's Name, Address, --Major Duties

Interests:
Lists of hobbies, interests and activities

References:
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

RESUMÉ OF . . . . . .
PERSONAL INFORMATION

EDUCATION
DIPLOMA AWARDED — Name of School, Address, Program Name, Dates Attended, --Facts and Achievements

WORK EXPERIENCE
POSITION NAME — Employer's Name, Address, Dates Worked, --Major Duties

SKILLS AND INTERESTS
ACTIVITY --Examples or names of organizations

REFERENCES
Available on request.

RESUME OF . . . . . .
PERSONAL INFORMATION
Work History

Position Name — Employer's Name
Dates Worked — Company Address

Major duties
-- _____
_____
-- _____
_____
-- _____

Education
Diploma Rec'd — Name of Instit.
Dates Attended — Address of Inst.
Program Name
Courses — Courses

RESUMÉ OF . . . . . .
PERSONAL INFORMATION
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

ACTIVITY -- Example and description
-- Example and description
-- Example and description
-- Example and description

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Final Stages

When you are satisfied with your written draft, type a final version. Once it is typed, proofread it carefully to make sure there are no factual, spelling or typing errors. Correct any mistakes carefully and completely. (Be prepared to re-type it several times if necessary until you have a perfect original.) Next you should have good quality copies made - you may need as many as 100. The reproduction stage is very important. All your work will be wasted if you skimp on the quality of the copies. It is worth the small investment to take your final typed original to a fast printing outlet and have your copies made professionally.

(d) SCHEDULING AND RECORD-KEEPING

Over the course of your job search you will be contacting a lot of people. Very soon, unless you keep track of what you've been up to, everything will fade into a blur. You know you've been busy, but you can't really remember what you've done, who you've seen or what the results were. If you get no immediate results, you may well become depressed, throw up your hands in despair and either sink into apathy or grab at the first job you are offered.

To avoid this problem and to use your time effectively you should plan a daily and weekly schedule, keep a daily summary of your activities and records of the status of each of your job applications. As well, you should file copies of all the material you have sent to each organization to which you applied. Thus, if you are asked to an interview, you will have a record of what you sent.

PLANNING YOUR SCHEDULE

Your job search activities can be divided into four categories: locating job prospects; contacting employers to inquire about openings or to apply for vacancies; preparing for and attending interviews; and following up interviews until you have discovered the results. Each week of your job search, you will be undertaking activities in all these areas. Therefore, you should plan a weekly schedule that allows time for each one.

At the beginning of each week, you should prepare a tentative schedule with blocks of time alloted to each type of activity. Then, as the week progresses, you can make the necessary changes, such as allowing times for interviews that you are requested to attend. The following example is provided to help you plan your own schedule.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:00	Read and clip paper	Read and clip paper	Read and clip paper	Read and clip paper	Read and clip paper	Read and clip paper
9:00	prepare weekly schedule	make personal	search for new prospects -- visit	Telephone applications or inquiries	Telephone applications or inquiries	
10:00	Telephone applications or inquiries	visits or	library to read professional	letters of application	letters of application	
11:00	Letters of application	interviews	magazines, directories, etc.	follow-up activities		
12:00	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
1:00	letters	letters of application	letters of application	make personal visits to	follow-up	
2:00	phone calls or	phone calls	phone calls	employment agencies, or company	phone personal contacts	
3:00	interviews	follow-up	follow-up	personnel offices	review of week	
4:00	Administra-tive tasks	Administra-tive tasks	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks	

The advantage of a schedule is that it allows you to use your time effectively and to plan your up-coming events. At the beginning of each week, be sure to allow time for each category of activity. Then, when an employer specifies a time for an interview, you can re-arrange your schedule to use your time well. For example, if you are asked to go to an interview early one morning, you can plan to use the rest of that morning visiting employment agencies or personnel offices rather than waiting until the regularly scheduled time for that activity. This will save you travelling time.

There are some activities you should do daily, such as reading your local paper in search of job openings and keeping records of your activities. In addition, you should write some letters of inquiry or application and/or make some telephone calls. Activities you should do at least weekly include researching new job possibilities and visiting employment agencies and company personnel offices.

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR ACTIVITIES AND APPLICATIONS

At the end of each day you should spend a few minutes noting the activities you did that day. As well, you should list the names of the companies to which you applied and indicate the stage of your application.

The Daily Activity Register

This is a record of the activities you performed during the day. Completing it gives you the chance to reflect on your day's work, note things to be done the next day and to assess the progress of your campaign.

You may realize, for example, that you have been spending all your time looking for job prospects but that you never seem to get around to actually applying for jobs. Or you may discover that you are making contact with employers only in writing rather than trying other techniques such as telephone calls or personal visits.

Looking for a job can be a scary or depressing experience. Many people convince themselves that they have been looking very hard when, in fact, they have actually not applied for anything. By recording your activities you will keep from fooling yourself about what you have accomplished.

As a rule of thumb, you should start your job search by locating about 20 possibilities. In the following days you should make inquiries or applications to all the original prospects, arranging interviews if possible. Once you have contacted all your original prospects, you should search for more while continuing to follow up on your first prospects until you have received a firm positive or negative response. Your daily register might look like this over the course of a week:

DAILY ACTIVITY REGISTER								
DATE	START TIME	FINISH TIME	NO. OF JOB PROSPECTS LOCATED	NUMBER OF LETTERS WRITTEN	NUMBER OF PHONE CALLS MADE	NUMBER OF PERSONAL VISITS	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	
							PREP	ATTEND
1/03	3:30	4:30	20	0	0	0	0	0
2/03	8:00	4:15	0	3	5	2	0	0
3/03	8:15	4:00	1	4	5	0	1	0
4/03	8:40	5:00	0	1	0	1	0	1
5/03	8:30	4:30	3	2	2	0	0	0

This register indicates a well balanced job search schedule. The person is using all three methods of contacting employers -- letters, phone calls and personal visits. The campaign has started to show results because the register records that an interview was attended. (For your copy of the Daily Activity Register, see page 40.)

The Employment Application Summary

Because there may be a lengthy time gap between the date that you apply for a job and the time that you get a response to your application, you may find it useful to keep a summary sheet that lists the name of the company to which you applied and the results of your application. This summary helps you keep track of the status of each of your applications. For example, if you see that there has been no response to your application after two weeks, you are alerted that you would be wise to follow up your application with a phone call or letter.

The summary helps you assess the effectiveness of your campaign. If, for example, you have made 50 applications and have received no interview requests, it is clear that you are doing something wrong. It is time to spend a few minutes reflecting on your search. Are you applying for the wrong type or level of job? Are your letters of application ineffective? Does your resumé need an overhaul? Should you try different methods of making contact with employers such as telephone calls or personal visits?

Below is an example of an Employment Applications Summary. As you will see, it provides you with space to record the date you applied, the date you received a response, a remarks column in which you can note the type of response received, a column in which to note the interview date, space for your views on the result of the interview, and space to record the date of your follow-up activities and their results.

DATE	COMPANY NAME	APPLIC-ATION DATE	RESPONSE RECEIVED DATE	REMARKS	INTER-VIEW DATE	RESULTS	FOLLOW UP SENT DATE	REMARKS

MAINTAINING YOUR FILES

Because there is a fair amount of paper-work in your job search campaign, you will need to organize a simple filing system. You will be preparing lists of prospective employers, making notes of telephone conversations, keeping copies of letters of application and follow-up letters, and making notes about the success of your interviews. If you don't organize your papers into a system, you will soon forget what they mean.

Basically you will need four files. Your first file is used to collect the names of prospective employers whom you have not yet contacted. Once you have contacted the employer either by telephone or in writing, you should clip the note about the prospective employer to the copy of the letter you sent or notes about your phone conversation and put them into an "applications in progress" file. Once you receive an answer to your employment inquiry, you should attach the copy of the letter or the results of the phone call and file them. If the results of the inquiry were negative, put the notes into an "applications rejected" file. If the results were positive, that is if you were invited to an interview or given some other positive sign that your application is receiving serious consideration, you should put your notes into an "interviews pending" file. Once you have had the interview, you should assess the results, write a follow-up letter and clip copies of these documents to your original notes. Only when you know for certain that your application has been turned down should you put the material into your "applications rejected" file.

By keeping these files you will be able to see at a glance the status of each of your applications. By keeping all the documents about each application together, you will always be prepared to deal with the interview situation or the job offers you receive.

SUMMARY

Your job search campaign will be most productive if you spend a little time at the beginning organizing yourself. If you are presently unemployed, you should plan to spend 35-40 hours a week looking for work. By planning a schedule, and keeping records of the results of your activities, you will both guard against becoming depressed and keep your search for work moving forward.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

DAILY ACTIVITY REGISTER

DATE	START TIME	FINISH TIME	NUMBER OF PROSPECTS LOCATED	NUMBER OF LETTERS WRITTEN	NUMBER OF PHONE CALLS MADE	NUMBER OF PERSONAL VISITS	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	
							PREPARED FOR	ATTENDED

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS SUMMARY

DATE	COMPANY NAME	APPLICATION DATE	RESPONSE RECEIVED DATE	REMARKS	INTERVIEW RECEIVED DATE	RESULTS	FOLLOW-UP SENT DATE	REMARKS

(e) LOCATING JOB PROSPECTS

At any given moment, there are thousands of job vacancies across Canada. They occur because the present job holder is promoted, transferred, resigns, retires or dies. New jobs are created because of the expansion or reorganization of active businesses or the opening of new firms. Even in periods of high unemployment there are vacancies.

Your immediate goal is to find and apply for current or upcoming openings in your chosen field. Although some jobs are advertised widely, the majority will not come to your attention unless you conduct a systematic and thorough search. This means you must go beyond the "Help Wanted" columns of your local newspaper.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Many people don't realize how many sources of information there are. In addition to the newspaper, you can use employment agencies, personal contacts, and publications such as directories and specialized trade magazines to find out about jobs. Some of these sources will help you locate current openings. Others are valuable as leads about possible future vacancies. You should be uncovering both actual and possible openings.

Here is a list of the major sources of information about job vacancies. They will be described more fully on the following pages.

Employment Agencies

1. CANADA EMPLOYMENT CENTRES
2. PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES
3. UNION HIRING HALLS
4. SCHOOL OR COLLEGE PLACEMENT OFFICES

Newspapers & Specialized Magazines

1. LOCAL OR NATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPERS
2. SPECIALIZED TRADE OR PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINES (serving a specific industry or occupation)

Personal Contacts

1. FRIENDS
2. NEIGHBOURS
3. RELATIVES
4. PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS
5. FORMER EMPLOYERS
6. ACQUAINTANCES IN CLUBS, VOLUNTEER OR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Directories of Employers

1. TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES
2. CITY DIRECTORIES
3. GENERALIZED DIRECTORIES

Employment Agencies

Employment agencies are brokers between employers and job-seekers. Employers list vacancies with an agency and the agency searches for qualified people to send to job interviews. There are several types of employment agencies:

1. CANADA EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

These centres, operated by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, are located in hundreds of cities and towns across Canada. They list jobs at all levels in the work force, although there are fewer listings at the managerial and professional levels.

Current openings are listed on a central Job Information Board. Clients read the listings and, if they find suitable openings, they go to a counsellor to get instructions about application procedures. There is no charge for these services either to employers or clients.

The counsellors also help clients with their job search by giving them advice or by enrolling them in short courses on job search techniques. If you think these services would be helpful to you, ask your counsellor for more information about them.

2. PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

These agencies are hired by employers to find qualified candidates for their vacancies. In Canada it is customary that the fees are paid by the employer rather than the client but you should check to make sure before registering with them. To find the agencies operating in your locality, look up "Employment

Agencies" in the yellow pages of your local telephone directory.

Employment agencies often specialize in certain types of jobs. Some fill only clerical positions; others deal exclusively with managerial openings. Before you register with an agency make sure it deals with jobs in your area; otherwise you'll be wasting your time.

Although the agency will prefer that you list only with them, you would be wise to register with several. Employers tend to deal mainly with one agency, so to get best coverage you should deal with them all. Be sure to check with the agency regularly, at least once a week. Otherwise you are likely to get forgotten.

Some agencies deal in filling temporary positions. Even if you are looking for a permanent position, you may want to list with temporary agencies just to keep some money coming in while you search for a good job.

3. UNION HIRING HALLS

In some occupations, hiring for most jobs is done at the union hiring hall. When an employer has a vacancy, s/he calls the union hall and asks for workers. The union then selects people from their lists to send. Therefore, if you want a job in one of these occupations, you must register at the hiring hall.

4. SCHOOL OR COLLEGE PLACEMENT OFFICES

Many schools, colleges and universities maintain student placement services for graduating or recently graduated students of theirs. Inquire whether there is such a service and if you are qualified to use it, do so. Many companies send professional recruiters to campuses to interview graduating studends, so this is a good source for solid job openings. As well, counsellors in these centres are most helpful in providing advice about how to conduct an effective job search.

Newspapers and Specialized Magazines

1. NEWSPAPERS

A key source of current openings is your local daily newspaper. Even if you don't subscribe to the paper regularly, you should do so during your job search. Choose the paper that has the largest section of "Help Wanted" ads. If you are considering moving to

another geographic location, you should also read the paper from that locality. Your local library should have copies of major Canadian dailies that you can use. If you don't know what papers are available, you will find a comprehensive list in the Canadian Corpus Almanac, which is also available at the library.

2. SPECIALIZED MAGAZINES

Most of the major industries and professions are serviced by trade publications. These magazines and newsletters often have classified sections that list current openings in the field. Such magazines may be published either by a commercial publishing house or by the occupational or professional association itself. To find out what magazines are available, you can either use the listing in the Canadian Corpus Almanac or write directly to the association that covers your area of occupational interest. A listing of associations may also be found in the Canadian Corpus Almanac.

USING THESE SOURCES

These publications, newspapers and specialized magazines, can be used both to find current openings and to discover potential employers.

Current Openings

Many employers use these publications to list their current vacancies in either the "Help Wanted" columns of the classified section or under the "Careers" section. You should look at both.

Read every ad. Circle those that seem, upon first reading, to have potential. Once you have read the entire listing, go back and consider the circled ads more carefully. For each position ask yourself both whether you meet the general qualifications and whether the working conditions appear satisfactory. If the ad specifies that a degree is required and you haven't completed high school, forget the job. As well, if the ad states that the salary range is $8,000 to $10,000 and you wouldn't consider accepting less than $12,000, don't bother to apply. In either case you are wasting both your time and that of the employer. If, upon careful reading, the job still seems to be suitable, cut out or copy the ad onto a "Prospective Employer Record." (This Record will be described further on page 51.)

Be wary of "blind" ads, ones that ask you to reply to a box number. Unless the job description sounds too good to pass up, you are better off ignoring it. For one thing, you don't know what organization you are applying to. As well, these ads are often used by companies just to test the market rather than to advertise a real opening. Other ads to be careful about are those that ask you to "Invest in Your Future." Often they mean just that; you will be requested to invest your own money in the job.

Hidden Leads

Newspapers and specialized magazines are also useful sources for discovering potential employers. Since a major reason for new openings is the expansion or reorganization of currently operating businesses, stories about such events should alert you to the possibility that new workers may be required. The "Business" and "Local News" sections of your newspaper can show you the firms in your area that are in the process of change. As well, the stories may help you discover employers in your area that are likely to hire people with your skills. Trade magazines are even better in this regard since they report stories about innovations, changes, diversifications and reorganizations of firms in the industry.

If you find such a story, cut it out and add it to your prospective employer file. A letter or phone call of inquiry would be in order.

Personal Contacts

The people you know are an excellent source of leads about current or upcoming job openings. Moreover, these people are interested in you as a person and are probably willing to keep their ears open if they know you are looking for work. Since many of them are probably employed, they are in a good position to know about openings in their companies or the companies of their clients that are not yet widely known.

You start by making a list of all the people you know well enough to ask about possibilities. You should call or speak to everyone on your list both to ask them for names of possible employers and to ask them to circulate your resumé when they hear about openings. Because people tend to forget about your concerns or assume that you have

found something unless they are told differently, you should make it a regular part of your job search schedule to keep in contact with these people.

Directories of Employers

A very important method of discovering job openings is canvassing employers who hire people in your occupational area. Many employers do not advertise openings. Instead they use their informal contacts or the files in their personnel offices. Unless you are known to the employer, you won't even be considered for openings. It is useful, therefore, to submit applications to employers even when you aren't sure that an opening exists.

When making unsolicited applications, it is necessary to apply only to organizations who hire people in your occupational area. To help you find these employers, there are a number of directories.

1. TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES
Your local telephone directory is one of your most useful weapons in the job search campaign. The Yellow Pages, which list companies by subject areas, will help you find all the firms in your local area who are likely to need people like you. Go through the relevant sections of the Yellow Pages, noting the names, phone numbers, and addresses of companies that seem suitable, and put the list into your "prospective employers" file.

2. CITY DIRECTORIES
Many municipalities keep an up-to-date list of the companies operating in their area. As well, in major towns and cities, local community organizations often prepare directories about services available in their community. Both of these types of directories can give you names and addresses of possible employers.

3. GENERALIZED DIRECTORIES
There are many directories that list major employers, professional associations, or companies operating in specific industries. A few major ones are listed here. In addition, you should be able to find many others in your local library.

Canadian Corpus Almanac:

Published annually, this book is a store-house of information about newspapers, trade magazines and associations operating in Canada. As well, there is a lot of information about educational institutions, and federal and provincial governments. Since governments are a major Canadian employer, you should find these sections useful.

Fraser's Canadian Trade Directory:

This publication, published by Maclean-Hunter, lists and classifies manufacturers, wholesale dealers and importers by the types of products in which they deal.

Poor's Register of Directors and Executives: United States and Canada:

This annual directory has an alphabetic listing of several thousand leading business firms, their principal products and services, number of employees and names of key executives.

USING THESE SOURCES

Your purpose is to make lists of potential employers. Begin by choosing the types of employers for which you are looking. Obviously, this means choosing the types of employers likely to hire people in your occupational area. Many of these publications have a subject index that will help you find suitable names. It is not necessary to make a complete list right at the beginning. Start by using one source to identify 20 to 30 prospects. Work into your job search schedule a weekly visit to the library to use the directories to find more leads.

RECORD KEEPING

As you can see, you will be using several different sources for information about job openings. It is important to keep track both of the source of the lead and the name of the prospective employer. To keep your information about each prospect organized, you will need different types of record-keeping forms. On the following pages, you will be given examples of record-keeping forms based on (1) Employment Agency Contacts; (2) Newspaper Want Ads; (3) Personal Contacts; and (4) Prospective Employer Records found in directories. You will be using this information when making contact with your leads.

PERSONAL CONTACTS RECORD

Name of Contact: _____

Occupation: _____ Telephone (home)_____

Date of Contact: _____ (office)_____

Information Received

Company Name: _____

Type of Business: _____

Type of Position: _____

Present Openings: _____ Future Possibilities: _____

Name of person to contact about openings: _____

Position of Contact: _____

Permission to use your contact's name? Yes _____ No _____

Additional Remarks: _____

_____

_____

AGENCY CONTACTS RECORD

Name of Agency: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Name of Counsellor: _____

Date of Contact: _____ Phone Call_____ Personal Visit_____

Date of Registration: _____

Record of Assistance

Interview Received

Date: _____ Name of Company: _____

Type of Position: _____

Results: _____

Remarks: _____

_____

JOB AD RECORD

TAPE OR GLUE WANT AD HERE

Source of Ad: _____

Date of Ad: _____

Contact Stage: _____

Results: _____

Date: _____

Remarks: _____

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER RECORD

Organization Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Type of Position Desired: _____ Division of interest to you: _____

Manager of Division: _____ Telephone: _____

Personnel Director: _____ Telephone: _____

Source of Information: _____

Date: _____ Wrote: _____ Called: _____ Phoned: _____

Remarks: _____

(f) INITIAL PREPARATION-SUMMARY

The first few days of your job search campaign should be spent planning and organizing your campaign. There are five basic steps in this process. You begin by organizing a place to work regularly. Next you gather the clothing and grooming aids necessary to present a good impression at job interviews. Third, you prepare a personal information package that includes a brief resumé of your work-related history and the necessary documents to prove your statements. Then you prepare a tentative schedule of activities and organize your record-keeping and filing systems. Finally, you ease into the search by locating names of possible employers.

This chapter has described each of these steps in detail. The instructions, checklists and sample forms have been included to help you make sure that you have completed each step. By now you should be ready to begin contacting employers directly. The next chapter will provide you with help in this important stage.

Chapter III / Making Contact with Employers

Whether you are applying for actual openings or asking about future vacancies, there are only three ways to contact employers- in writing, by telephone or in person. Each method has advantages and disadvantages.

Although you will probably use all three methods, the one you use most often will depend on many things. When you have a choice, you should use the way you are most comfortable with. For example, you may be a whiz on the telephone and a wipeout at letters. Sometimes, however, you will have to use other approaches. For example, the job ad may tell you the method the employer wants you to use. In this case, follow instructions. Or you may live too far from the company offices either to make a personal visit or to make a local phone call. In these cases, you will usually find it best to write to the employer.

The application method may vary according to the type of work you are looking for. For professional and managerial jobs, written applications are most common; for most clerical and sales jobs, you are asked to telephone; and for semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, you are usually asked to visit the company offices to fill in an application form.

The following pages will describe each method.

(a) WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

Written applications usually contain two main parts: a covering letter and an enclosed resumé or application form. Since you have already prepared your resumé (see Chapter II (c) Preparing Your Personal Information Package), this section will deal with preparing letters and applications.

(i) THE COVERING LETTER

Purpose

The purpose of the covering letter is to introduce you to the potential employer. The letter should state the kind of work you want, describe briefly your major qualifications for the job and request an interview. It should make the reader want to read your enclosed resumé or application form carefully.

General Guidelines

Whether you are writing a letter of application for a known job opening or a letter of inquiry asking about possibilities, your letter is your first contact with the employer. If it looks attractive and is well written, the reader will treat it seriously. If not, it is likely to be quickly filed in the garbage can. The letter should state clearly what work you want and what your qualifications are. If you are vague or rambling, the employer won't take the time to figure out if s/he can use you. The following rules apply to all your letters.

DO'S	DON'TS
1. The letter should always be typed on good quality, 8½ x 11 inch paper.	1. Don't be too aggressive or too humble. High-pitched hype, a hail-fellow-well-met approach or begging for a job are more likely to annoy than impress the reader. As well, don't talk about salary unless specifically asked to do so.
2. The letter should be short, rarely more than one page long. It should be centred on the page. The writing style should be formal and polite and it should follow a standard business format.	2. Don't rely on a friend to correct your mistakes. Don't scratch out or write out or write over your mistakes--instead, re-type the letter.

3. Proofread your letter before sending it. If you find errors, correct them neatly or retype the letter.

4. Type the envelope on business size stationery. Make sure you have included your return address and affix sufficient postage.

5. Send the handsigned original of the letter and keep an unsigned carbon copy for your files.

3. Never handwrite the envelope. It is the employer's first contact with you and s/he won't be impressed.

4. Don't rely on someone else to mail the letter for you. The letter is more important to you than to your friend and s/he may well forget the errand until it is too late.

Contents of the Letter

Every letter of application or inquiry has three main parts: the heading material, the body, and the closing material. The heading provides information about the sender and identifies the recipient. The body explains the purpose of the letter and the action expected of the reader; the closing specifies the writer and indicates whether there are any enclosures such as a resumé. On the following page there is an example that shows the form and content of a typical letter. Each of the parts has been numbered. Each section is described more fully on the succeeding pages.

Sample Letter

(a) 1 Main Street,
Anytown, Province,
A2B 2C4
1 April 1980

Ms. J.W. Okiba, (b)
Personnel Manager,
ABC Company, Inc.,
100 Busy Street,
Anytown, Province
D5E 6F7

Dear Ms. Okiba: (c)

I would appreciate your considering my application for the position of Management Trainee as advertised in the Anytown Crier on 29 March, 1980. As a satisfied customer of yours for several years, I would welcome the opportunity to take a place among your courteous, helpful staff.

Since graduating from high school two years ago with a specialization in commercial subjects, I have gained a variety of experiences in retail sales, bookkeeping and inventory control. The enclosed resumé will provide you with details about my work history. My ability to work well with people and my personal desire to excel, coupled with my work experience, should provide a good basis for success in the management trainee position you seek to fill.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. You can reach me to arrange an interview at 222-2222. I look forward to your response.

(a) Yours sincerely,

Robert Leblanc

(b) Robert Leblanc
(c) 222-2222

encl. (d)

1. HEADING MATERIAL

The purpose of the heading material is to provide the return address of the sender in case further correspondence is necessary, and to identify the recipient clearly. There are three parts:

(a) Sender's return address and date of the letter.
The first line gives the street address, including apartment number; the second line specifies the name and province of the sender's home town; the third line gives the postal code; and the fourth gives the date the letter was written.

(b) Inside address of the recipient.
The first line gives the name of the recipient; the second line gives the person's title; the third line specifies the company name; the fourth line provides the street address of the firm; and the last two lines identify the town, province and postal code.

(c) Salutation or formal greeting to the reader.
Commonly, one uses "Dear _____." Other forms of address include "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" or "Gentlemen:"

2. BODY OF THE LETTER

The body is the essential part of the letter. In a covering letter, it typically contains three paragraphs: the introduction; the summary of qualifications; and the request for action close.

(a) Introductory paragraph.
The purpose of the introductory, or opening, paragraph is to tell the reader exactly why you are writing and to capture his/her interest.

The opening sentence usually specifies the name of the job you are interested in and the source of your information.

THE OPENING SENTENCE - 5 EXAMPLES

1. Please accept my application for the position of Medical Laboratory Technician as advertised in the Globe and Mail on Tuesday, October 14.

2. I hope that you will agree that my two years' experience as a lab technician qualify me for the position of Medical Laboratory Technician as advertised in Tuesday's Globe and Mail.

3. Our mutual friend, Ms. Robin White, suggested I contact you to inquire about possible openings in your hospital for Medical Laboratory Technicians.

4. It has been brought to my attention that you may require the services of a Medical Laboratory Technician in your hospital. I would appreciate being considered for the position.

5. I am writing to inquire whether you need the services of a Medical Laboratory Technician in your hospital at present.

The introductory paragraph should also contain a statement about your reasons for applying to the particular organization. The purpose of your statement is to gain the reader's interest. Therefore, your wording must be positive and relevant. As well, you must be specific about the kind of work you want. If you suggest that any old job will do, you won't be considered for anything at all. If you can't think of any reasons for being interested in the firm, you can leave out this sentence, but your letter will be weaker without it.

CAPTURING THE READER'S INTEREST - 3 EXAMPLES

1. Your company's reputation as a manufacturer of good quality toys for children convinces me that I would be proud to work for you.

2. Having been a regular customer of yours for several years, I am impressed with the friendliness and knowledgeability of your staff.

3. A recent Newsweek article about your recent diversification into new lines, makes me believe that yours is a dynamic company that I would like to work for.

(b) Summary of Your Qualifications.

In the middle paragraph, your goal is to present a convincing summary of your qualifications for the position. Your resumé, which accompanies the letter, spells out the details. In the letter, you should highlight the parts of your education or

work experience that are most relevant for the job. You can figure this out from the description of the work duties given in the want ad. If the ad indicates that creativity is desired, you should emphasize the creative elements of your experience. Try to give concrete examples. If the employer is looking for a hard worker, say more than that you are not afraid of hard work. Give an example. Your proof might be that you rebuilt your car motor, working several hours each evening until the job was finished.

SUMMARY OF YOUR QUALIFICATIONS - 3 EXAMPLES

1. My two years' experience as a savings tellér and assistant supervisor of the Savings Department have given me a good understanding of the importance of speed and accuracy in dealing with customer accounts and tact and courtesy in dealing with clients. As my enclosed resumé indicates, I have had experience in both on-line and manual systems and I am familiar with all the operations of a savings department. In addition, as assistant supervisor and acting supervisor for two months, I gained valuable experience in organizing and scheduling the work of the department and dealing with personnel problems.

2. I will be completing my B.Sc. degree in biology as of May 1. During my school years I maintained a "B" average while working part-time as a lab assistant in the biology department. This work has given me useful experience in maintaining laboratory equipment and setting up and monitoring experiments. My ability to work with people is demonstrated by the praise I received from both faculty and students for my patience and co-operative attitude.

3. My qualifications, which are detailed in the enclosed resumé, include experience driving large trucks, working as a night security guard and practice in building maintenance. I am capable of doing minor repairs on cars and small appliances. As my former supervisors will tell you, I am a hard worker who doesn't go home leaving a job half-finished.

(c) Request for Action Closing:

Your goal in the final paragraph is to spur the reader to arrange an interview with you. Therefore, the closing should request an interview, state the times when you are available

and give a phone number at which you can be reached during the day. It is polite to thank the reader for considering your application. You should also imply that you expect a positive response by including a statement like "I look forward to hearing from you."

REQUEST FOR ACTION CLOSING - 4 EXAMPLES

1. Thank you for considering my application. If my qualifications are of interest to you, I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience. I can be reached at 666-6666 during business hours. I look forward to your call.

2. May I have an interview to discuss my qualifications with you in further detail? I can come to your office whenever you suggest. The telephone number I can be reached at during the day is 777-7777. Thank you for your interest.

3. I will be in the Halifax area between May 5 and 9. I will call you when I arrive to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. I believe I can be an asset to your organization and I look forward to discussing the possibilities with you.

4. In closing, I would like to thank you for your consideration. I am willing to meet with you at your convenience to provide you with any further information you desire. You can reach me to arrange an interview at 555-5555 every day except Monday. I look forward to our meeting.

3. CLOSING MATERIAL

At the end of the letter you must sign off formally. The parts of the closing are:

(a) Complimentary Close,
which is a formal expression of your respect for the recipient of the letter. Most commonly, one uses the words "Yours sincerely" or "Sincerely." You may also use "Respectfully yours" or a similar close.

(b) Your signature,
which should be handwritten in blue pen.

(c) Typed signature,
and, if you wish to include it, your phone number. It is important to type your name because many signatures are all but illegible.

(d) Indication of enclosures

In business letters, enclosures are indicated by the letters "encl." typed on the line below your typed signature on the left-hand side of the page. The purpose of this notation is to alert the reader that there is further material enclosed in the envelope.

Summary

The covering letters which should accompany every mailed resumé or application form, introduces you to a potential employer. It may well be the basis on which your application is accepted or rejected. Therefore, it should make a good impression. The appearance is important; it should always be typed on good quality paper and it should follow a standard business format. The contents are critical. You should open with a clear statement about the type of work you are seeking. This is followed by a brief outline of your most significant qualifications. In closing you should request action from the reader.

(ii) THE APPLICATION FORM

In addition to a letter, you will need to fill out application forms. Like the covering letter, you will be judged on their appearance and contents, so be prepared to spend some time doing a good job on them. The forms may be mailed to your home or you may be asked to complete them in personnel offices.

Purpose of the Form

The application form serves the same purpose as the resumé; that is, it is a brief summary of your qualifications for the job you are seeking. It differs from the resumé in that it is organized to meet the employer's needs rather than yours. You can use your resumé to help you complete the form, but never refer the employer to your resumé. Part of the purpose of the form is to see whether you can follow instructions. So don't take the attitude that repeating the information is a waste of your time. If you want the job you will have to go through the hoops the employer has set.

General Guidelines

Below are examples of two completed application forms. As you can see, the one on the left has been done quickly. The writing is messy, there are spelling and grammar mistakes, words have been crossed out and written over, there are blanks, the reader has been referred to the resumé, and so on. It gives a very poor impression of the person who completed it. The one on the right tells an entirely different story. The information has been printed clearly, there are no obvious spelling or grammar errors, all the questions are answered, and there is a general impression of orderliness.

EXAMPLE A

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT--XYZ COMPANY
(Type or print nearly)

PERSONAL HISTORY

Name: Last Doley Q First Patrin

Address: Anytown Lane
Anytown Prov

Phone: Home 246-8026 Office

Marital Status: married — No. of dependents:

Type of Work Desired: whatever's available

Salary required: $6.00 per hour - min.

WORK HISTORY -- Start with most recent

Company Name and Address	Position Held	Dates From To	Reason for Leaving
Bert's Const. 100 Main St.	Labourer	June 76 Nov 76	Laid Off
ABC Building Realty Co 15 Lake St.	Maintenance Man	Feb 77 Sept 77	[illegible]
Trent Distillery 50 Bury St.	Truck Driver	Dec 77 June 78	Unsat. Work Supervisor

EDUCATION

Name and Address of School	Date Attended	Highest grade completed
Anytown High School	Sept. 7[illegible] June 76	12

EXAMPLE B

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT--XYZ COMPANY
(Type or print neatly)

PERSONAL HISTORY

Name: Last DOE First JANE

Address: 1 Sleepy Hollow
Anytown, Province

Phone: Home 234-5678 Office: N/A

Marital Status: Single — No. of Dependants: None

Type of Work Desired: Lab technician

Salary required: to be discussed per

WORK HISTORY -- Start with most recent

Company Name and Address	Position Held	Dates From To	Reason for Leaving
Quality Foods Ltd. 15 Sunday Rd Anytown	checkout cashier	May 1977 Sept 1977	Returning to college (summer job)
Exploitation, Inc. 250 Industrial Ave. Anytown	general office clerk	June 1975 Sept 1976	decided to go to college
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

EDUCATION

Name and Address of School	Date Attended	Highest grade Completed
Anytown Community College 150 Wisdom Rd.	Sept 1976 June 1978	completed 2 yr. program in Laboratory Technology

If you had to choose, which of these applicants would you interview? Now think about the application forms you have filled out. Do they look more like Example A or Example B? When you fill in your next application form, try to match the standard set in example B. The payoff for spending the extra time is a better chance at an interview and, therefore, a job.

The following rules apply to all the application forms you will complete.

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Before starting, read the entire form carefully. If you sail boldly in, you may discover part way through that you have put some information in the wrong place.	1. Don't hurry through the form. The extra few minutes you spend can make the difference between getting the job you want or continuing a fruitless search.
2. Follow all instructions to the letter. If it says print, do so. If you are asked for your first name last and your last name first, that is what you should give.	2. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand the instructions. If an instruction seems unbelievably dumb, chances are that you don't understand it.
3. Write or print neatly. Your excellent qualifications may go unrecognized if your form is too messy or hard to read to be bothered with.	3. Don't scratch out or write over mistakes. Use an eraser or ask for a new copy of the form.
4. Answer all questions. If a question doesn't apply to you or if you feel it is an invasion of privacy, put the letters "N/A" (not applicable) in the space for the answer.	4. Don't leave blank spaces. The reader may assume that you forgot to answer, which looks careless, or that you have something to hide.

5. Use your resumé as a guide to your answers and a jog to your memory. It is easy to forget dates or addresses; your resumé is a good reminder of the facts.

5. Never answer a question by referring the reader to your resumé. Write out the answer completely. If you can't be bothered to fill in the information, you can be assured that the employer won't be bothered to look at your resumé.

6. Before returning the form, reread it carefully checking for spelling, accuracy, grammar and completeness. A careful proof-reading can save those embarrassing moments when an employer asks how it is possible that you were travelling in Europe at the same time as you were working in Calabogie.

6. Don't lie or omit relevant information. If you lie or "forget" to answer difficult questions, you do yourself a disservice. You lose the chance to explain the situation from your point of view and, if the employer later discovers the omission, you can be fired on the spot. Get the issue off your chest - if you aren't hired because of it, would you really want to work for that employer?

Contents of the Application Form

Application forms vary from brief overviews of your education and work experience to detailed histories of everything you have ever done. A reasonably detailed form, which you should complete as a practice exercise, is given below. Each section of the form has been numbered and guidelines about the types of information to include follow on the succeeding pages.

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT -- XYZ COMPANY
(Type or Print Neatly)

1. PERSONAL HISTORY

Name: Last First Middle Initial Maiden Name

Present Address (Number and Street)

(City) (Country) (Postal Code)

Telephone: Home: Office:

Type of Work Desired: Salary Required: $ per

How Did You Hear About This Company? Have You Applied Here Before? No Yes Date:

Names of Relatives Employed Here:

Do you have a preferred geographic location? No Yes Specify

Are you willing to relocate? ____No ____Yes

Are you willing to travel? ____No ____Yes

2. MILITARY SERVICE:

Have you ever served in the Canadian Armed Forces? ____ No ____Yes Branch:

	From	To	Rank at Discharge	Reason for Discharge
Dates of Service:				

3. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

TYPE OF SCHOOL	NAME & ADDRESS OF SCHOOL	DATES ATTENDED FROM	TO	HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED	DEGREE OR DIPLOMAS RECEIVED
High School					
Comm. College					
University					
Other					
Other					

Honours, Awards or Scholarships Received

4. WORK HISTORY--List Last Position First

Company Name and Address	Position Held	Name & Phone of Supervisor	Dates Worked From	To	Final Salary	Reason for Leaving

If you wish to explain anything about the above, do so here.

5. LEGAL STATUS

Have You Ever Been Bonded? ____Yes ____No
Have You Ever Been Refused Bonding Or Had Bonding Revoked? ___Yes ___No
Have You Ever Been Convicted Of An Indictable Offense? ___Yes ___No
If Yes, provide details _____

6. Describe any work experience or training that you have acquired that relate to the position applied for, or type of work desired. Include trades training, certificates, types of machines you can operate, secretarial experience etc.. This should also include any other skills demonstrated in voluntary or part-time work. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

7. PERSONAL INTERESTS - List hobbies, volunteer activities, etc.

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

You will always be required to provide your name, present address and a telephone number at which you can be reached during the day.

The Canadian Human Rights Code makes it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of age, sex or race of the applicant. Although many application forms still ask for this type of information, you are within your rights to refuse to give it. It is not required that you reveal your social insurance number until you have been hired by the company.

Do not be surprised if you are asked for very detailed personal information such as all your previous addresses for the past five to ten years, your marital status and number of dependents, whether you own or rent your housing, whether you have a car and a driver's licence, information about your spouse and parents, and your attitudes towards travel and relocation. If you feel that the information required is none of the employer's business, you can refuse to answer. Put the letters "N/A" or a statement such as "Confidential Information" in the space provided. Do not leave questions blank.

If you are asked questions about your preferred geographic location, your best bet (unless you have solid reasons for refusing to move) is to state that you have no preference. Even if you prefer to stay where you are, you shouldn't eliminate possibilities until you know what employment opportunities are being offered.

2. MILITARY SERVICE
Employers often look kindly upon applicants who have served in the military. In some cases, as with the federal or provincial governments, applicants with a service background are given preference.

3. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
You will almost always be asked to list the names and addresses of the schools and colleges you have attended, the dates you attended, your highest completed grade and the diplomas or degrees you were awarded. In addition, you may be asked about your major field of study, the names of your courses and your final average. There may be space to list honours, awards and scholarships. This is the place to indicate that you were class valedictorian, on the honours list or whatever. You can also stretch the definition to include such honours as class president or treasurer, president of a student club, etc. Note that you are usually asked to list your education from the most recent backwards. Look carefully for this type of instruction and do what it says.

4. WORK HISTORY
Every application form you will ever complete will allow space to list your previous work experience. At the very least you will be asked for company names and addresses, the titles of your

positions and the dates you worked at each place. You will also probably be asked for your supervisor's name, title and phone number; your starting and leaving salary and your reasons for leaving. Also, space will usually be provided to list your major work duties.

Many people have difficulty with this section. If your work history has been spotty, if you have changed jobs often, or if your reasons for leaving were unpleasant, you will probably feel worried about what to write. Time spent considering these questions now will make it easier to answer the questions well when they appear.

The golden rule is to "think positive." For example, if you have been a homemaker for several years, you should list this as work experience. You can rightly say that you were self-employed in a very demanding job. Major volunteer activities can be listed if you worked at them regularly and devoted a set amount of time to them on a regular basis. When asked your reasons for leaving, try to put as good a face on the situation as possible. This is <u>not</u> the place to throw accusations at previous employers; you stand to lose far more than they do.

You will sometimes be given space to explain weaknesses in your work history. Use it to provide a positive statement about the future. For example, if you have changed jobs frequently, explain that you have settled down, decided upon a firm occupational goal and plan to commit yourself permanently to your career. If your family situation or personal attitudes have changed, explain that the changes have made it possible to devote yourself to your future career.

In short, when completing the sample form, look for the positive aspects of your past situations and stress them in your answers.

5. LEGAL STATUS

You may be asked about your legal history. If you have had difficulties in this area, don't lie or cover them up. You may not get the job if you tell the truth, but this is less devastating than getting fired if the situation becomes known later.

6. EXPLANATION OF YOUR PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Application forms for many technical, professional and managerial jobs often contain space for you to write a short paragraph outlining how your past experiences qualify you for the position under discussion. Here, you should highlight the aspects of your background that are most relevant for the job in question.

You should begin by preparing a rough draft. List three or four major requirements of the job and for each qualification use two examples from your work or education that show you meet the requirements. Only when you are satisfied with your draft should you transcribe it to the application form.

7. PERSONAL INTERESTS

Since employers believe that the way you spend your leisure time reflects how you will perform at work, there is often a section devoted to your personal activities. This is the place to list your volunteer or community association work, community honours or awards, special skills such as language skills, and hobbies. This is your chance to show your special strengths. Use it!

(b) TELEPHONE INQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of your telephone inquiry or application is to convince the employer to give you an interview. Therefore, for each phone call, you should know who you are calling, why you are calling, what information you want to give, the answers to questions you are likely to be asked, and what action you want the listener to perform.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following rules apply to all your telephone applications.

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Plan your call before you make it. Know who you are calling, the purpose of your call and the results you expect.	1. Don't waste the employer's time. Make sure you are speaking to the right person, then keep your remarks brief. Don't ramble and don't be vague about why you're calling.
2. Before you make the call, gather the materials you will need, such as pens, paper, your daily schedule, etc.	2. Don't make the employer wait while you run around getting the things you should have had before you started.
3. If you tend to be nervous, practise your call before you make it. A tape recorder comes in handy here.	3. Avoid speaking too loudly or too softly. Ask your friends to tell you honestly how you sound on the phone and correct your problem areas by practice.
4. Try to make your phone calls between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. or between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m.	4. As a general rule, avoid making calls first thing Monday morning or last thing Friday afternoon. Calls made at these times are unlikely to get the attention they deserve.
5. Be polite to everyone you speak to. This includes switchboard operators and receptionists, as well as the person you have called to speak to.	5. No matter how rude the person on the other end is, don't be rude yourself. Rudeness never got anyone anywhere.

USES OF THE TELEPHONE

The telephone is a very useful instrument in your job search campaign. You can use it to locate prospective employers, to research companies and to discuss possible vacancies or apply for present openings. It can save you hours that might otherwise be spent pounding the streets.

Obtaining Names of Company Officials

Whether you are applying by letter, by phone or in person, your application is more likely to get a good reception if it is addressed to a specific individual. Therefore, you need names.

Whether you have decided to contact the personnel manager, the president, the manager or the supervisor for a particular division, you should find out the person's name. To do this, all that is required is a telephone call to the switchboard. Ask the receptionist for the name(s) of the officer(s) you have chosen to contact, and the spelling too if the name is a difficult one.

Obtaining Company Publicity Materials

At the interview, your chances of getting the job are improved if you know something about the company's products and history. This information is only a phone call away. Most large organizations prepare publicity materials such as brochures, annual reports or recruiting literature that they will send you upon request.

To get them, phone the switchboard, ask for the public relations or information services division, and request that you be sent their company literature. Specify that you would like an annual report, a copy of the company newsletter or recruiting materials. Leave your name and address and you should have your informationn in a few days.

Inquiring About Possible Openings

If you are comfortable using the telephone, you can call the personnel manager or the head of the division that interests you to find out whether the company has or expects to have openings in your area. You can also ask your listener for names of other organizations likely to hire people in your occupation. Then, when you call the suggested organization, you can use your contact's name to lead into the conversation. If the listener seemed positive, you can follow your

phone call with a letter of application that refers to your phone call. You could also include your resumé. This way, you can bring your name to the employer's attention twice.

Applying for Actual Openings

In many cases, "Help Wanted" ads specify that interested applicants should call for an appointment. This screening method is frequently used when the job must be filled quickly. Employers then choose interviewees on the basis of the phone conversation.

CONTENTS OF THE PHONE CALL

Your phone calls should cover the same information as your letters of application. That is, they should be addressed to a particular individual; they should open with a brief statement about the reason for the call and the source of the information. The body of the phone call should be a summary of your most relevant qualifications. In closing the call, you should request action on the part of the listener. The following story outlines the sequence of the telephone application. Each part of the preparation has been numbered. On the succeeding pages, you will be given examples and illustrations of each part of the telephone application procedure.

RENEE'S STORY

Nineteen-year-old Renée Stanton graduated from high school in a general programme two years ago. Along with her academic courses, she took typing, business practice and bookkeeping. Since leaving school, she has had several short-term jobs as a cashier in a large grocery store, as a sales clerk in a shoe store and temporary clerical jobs. She's registered with a temporary agency and has been working three to four days a week. She has recently decided that she wants a permanent job and that a career in retail sales is the best path for her to follow. This morning she saw an ad in the paper for a management trainee with a national retail chain store. Although the opening is in her home city, the ad specified that applicants must be willing to relocate. Interested candidates were told to phone the personnel office at 222-2222 to arrange an interview. Here's what Renée did.

* * * * * * * *

1. Obtaining the needed facts — Renée decided that she would need the name of the personnel director. She could have called the personnel office as the ad said, but she thought she might have a better chance if she spoke to the person in charge of hiring. She began, therefore, by looking up the store's general number in the local telephone directory. Then she called the switchboard and asked for the name of the Personnel Manager. She wrote the name, Mr. Levitt, on her "Phone Call Planning and Information Record."

2. Planning the call — Next she planned her call. From the ad she discovered that the employer's requirements were three years work experience, preferably in retail sales, willingness to work irregular hours, and willingness to relocate. Graduation from high school was the minimum education requirement, although the employer preferred applicants who had completed a business administration programme at a community college. To help her assess her qualifications, she completed her "Phone Call Planning and Information Record." Here's what she noted:

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PHONE CALL PLANNING AND INFORMATION RECORD

Name of Position Sought: Management Trainee
Company Name: Arcadian General Stores
Name of Contact: Mr Levitt
Position: Personnel Manager **Telephone:** 222-2222
Source of Information: Anytown Crier, September 19
Employer Requirements: 3 years experience in retail sales; high school graduation, (C.C grad preferred); ability to get along with public; willingness to work irregular hours and to relocate.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Specify relevant programmes and courses

High school graduation, June 1977, courses in typing and bookkeeping, and general office practice

Work Experience: Specify general area and specific duties. Use volunteer or part-time experience if relevant:

Family shoe store -- sales clerk -- 6 mos; helped customers, handled cash, inventory control, bank deposits. Inflated Food Grocery -- cashier -- 7 mos.; handled cash, stocked shelves, helped with inventory, balanced cash daily; Tina's Temporary Personnel -- clerical -- 11 mos.; receptionist, stock room.

Personal Qualities: List qualities useful in performing the work of the position you are interested in and give examples to show you have them.

Public contact -- Mgr. of Family Shoes said sorry to see me leave because customers liked me so much; reliable -- haven't missed a day of work since leaving school; irregular hours -- shoe store and grocery -- preferred weekends and evenings because time went by fast; relocate -- single, want to travel.

Reason for interest in organization:

Long-time customer of store -- good products, nice staff

Results:

Follow-up: ____None ____Letter ____Resumé ____Interview ____Date: _____

As you can see, Renée geared all the information about her jobs and education to the requirements specified in the ad. She has stressed the retailing and public contact aspects of her work. Although she doesn't have three full years work experience, she has decided to apply anyway. Having prepared her ammunition, she is prepared to make her call.

* * * * * * * *

The phone rings in the company office.

REC: Good morning, Personnel Department. May I help you?

RENÉE: Good morning, this is Renée Stanton calling. May I speak to Mr. Levitt please?

REC: One moment please. I'll connect you.

* * * * * * * *

LEVITT: Levitt speaking.

3. Greeting

RENÉE: Good morning Mr. Levitt, my name is Renée Stanton. I'm calling to apply for the position of management trainee that was advertised in this morning's paper. Your company has an excellent reputation here in town and I would enjoy the chance to work for you.

LEVITT: Well that's good to hear, Renée. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

4. Summary of Qualifications

RENÉE: Certainly. Since graduating from high school two years ago I gained experience working in retail sales. I was a sales clerk at the Family Shoe Store and my duties involved dealing with customers, handling cash and credit transactions and keeping track of the inventory.

LEVITT: How did you enjoy the retail business, Renée?

5. Mini-Interview

RENÉE: I really liked it. I like meeting people and I really felt that they appreciated my help. In fact, when I left the shoe store the manager, Mrs. Tilley, said she was really sorry to see me leave because the customers liked me so much.

LEVITT: Well, that sounds positive. As you know, there are a lot of pressures in the retail sales business. The hours are irregular; you'd have to work some evenings and weekends. Also, as a trainee, you'd have to move from store to store to get experience in various aspects of the business. How do you feel about that?

RENÉE: Well, first of all the hours wouldn't bother me, in fact I prefer them. At both the shoe store and the grocery

store I had to work evenings and weekends and I liked working them best. The store was always busy and the time flew by. Besides, it gave me the chance to run my own errands during the day.
As for the travel part, I really look forward to that. I'm single and plan to remain that way and I'd love the opportunity to see a bit of the country.

LEVITT: Well, your qualifications sound pretty good. I'm expecting some more phone calls about the position so why don't you leave your name and phone number and I'll get back to you later in the week if we decide to interview you.

6. Closing Remarks

RENÉE: Fine. My name is spelled R..e..n..é..e....S..t..a..n..t ..o..n, and my home phone number is 333-3333. May I bring you a copy of my resumé this afternoon? It will give you more detailed information about my qualifications. Would three o'clock be suitable?

LEVITT: Well, I may be out but you are welcome to drop the resumé round.

RENÉE: I'll do that then. Thank you for the chance to talk about the job, Mr. Levitt. I'd like to work for your store. Goodbye.

* * * * * * * *

Renée spent the rest of the morning and early afternoon writing letters of application for other jobs she was interested in. At about 2:00 p.m. she got dressed in her interview clothes, made sure that she looked neat and clean, and that her shoes were shined. Then she caught a bus at 2:30 and arrived at the store at 2:50. This left her a few minutes to check her appearance in the washroom and find the personnel office. When she went in she asked the receptionist politely if she could see Mr. Levitt now, as she was expected. She was in luck, and got the chance to deliver her resumé to Mr. Levitt personally. Their meeting was brief, just a few minutes to hand over her resumé, but she felt she had made a good impression. On the way home she decided she really wanted the job, so she spent a half-hour writing a short note to Mr. Levitt to thank him for the chance to apply for the job. Then she filed her notes about the job and recorded her activities on her Daily Activity Register. Now she had to sit back and wait.

Renée's story shows you the importance of being prepared. If she had not known the personnel manager's name she would have had to have left her name with the receptionist and hope that her call would be returned. If she had

not been ready to describe the parts of her background that were relevant to the job, she could have lost the chance for an interview by talking about such things as her age, her interest in theatre or her family background. Since employers want to find out what you have to offer, it is worth spending a little time figuring out answers that will help them assess your application favourably. Not all telephone interviews will go as smoothly as did this example. Rather, this is the ideal you should strive to achieve. The following discussion of each part of the telephone application process should help you achieve this goal.

Obtaining the Needed Facts

Before you actually make the call, you must get the name of the most suitable person to speak to and you must know the general requirements of the organization. As was pointed out earlier, you can get this information by phoning the central office number of the organization in which you are interested. The switchboard operator should be able to give you the names of company officials, the public relations, or the information services department, which will send you copies of the organization's publicity materials.

Planning the Call

Before each phone call of inquiry or application, it pays to spend 10 to 15 minutes preparing yourself. You will want to be able to tell the employer the reason for your call, specify the type of position you are interested in, summarize your pertinent qualifications and request the employer's action. Since this is a conversation, you must be prepared to answer the listener's questions about your reasons for interest in the organization and in the particular job.

If you are unprepared, you are unlikely to come up with convincing responses on the spur of the moment. Therefore, to help you plan your call, a "Phone Call Planning and Information Record" has been created to help you (see page 82.) Prepare one for each phone call you make. After the call, make a note of the results on the form and file it for future use. It is your record of the conversation.

Introductory Opening

Having planned the call, you are now ready to make it. After having been connected with the person you have chosen, the first few moments

of the call are used to introduce yourself. As with the letter, you must be brief, specific and catch the listener's interest.

INTRODUCTORY OPENING - 4 EXAMPLES

1. Good morning Ms. McKenna, this is Roger Lachance calling. I would like to apply for the position of parts manager advertised in this morning's Chronicle. The job sounds challenging and I believe that my qualifications meet your needs.

2. Good morning, sir. My name is Shirley Finister and I'm calling to see whether your company expects to have openings for trained mechanics in the next little while. Mr. Jones of ABC Company suggested that you might need someone with my background.

3. Good afternoon, Dr. Ainsley, my name is Alain Pedersen. Our mutual friend, Petra Kamarov, suggested that you might be looking for a receptionist. I'd appreciate the chance to describe my qualifications to you.

4. Good afternoon Mr. Pelletier, this is Alice Ho calling. I read recently that your company is planning to open a new branch in the west end of the city. If you are looking for a supervisor or assistant supervisor in your savings department, I'd appreciate the chance to apply.

Summary of Your Qualifications

The body of the phone call is your chance to describe your relevant qualifications. Once you have introduced yourself, it is up to the listener to determine whether s/he wants to continue the conversation. If the person seems uninterested, don't push the situation. It is wiser to end the conversation politely. You can, if you wish, follow up the call with a brief letter and a copy of your resumé.

If the listener shows interest, however, it is time to briefly summarize how your background meets his/her needs. You might be asked something like "Tell me a bit about yourself." In your answer, stick to the facts that show you are a qualified applicant.

SUMMARY OF YOUR QUALIFICATIONS - 3 EXAMPLES

1. For the past year I've been working as an inventory control clerk at ABC Parts, Inc. My duties include contacting suppliers for price quotes, preparing purchase orders and inspecting incoming orders. Also, I have to maintain inventory control records.

   I've had a chance to get some experience in running the department. When the parts manager was on holiday I was put in charge and I really enjoyed the responsibility of the job. When the manager came back, he told me I'd done a great job, that everything was running as smoothly as if he hadn't been away at all.

2. I've just finished a course in auto mechanics at the Technical Institute. The course included practical experience and my instructor, Ms. Ransom, said I had really learned the basics thoroughly.

   In my spare time I rebuilt an old car that is in great running order now. I'd like the chance to put my knowledge and enthusiasm for cars to work for you.

3. I have good clerical skills--I can type at 60 wpm, I can take shorthand and I've had experience in billing and bookkeeping. As well, it's important that a receptionist be able to get along with people. When I worked as a volunteer at the hospital, the nurses told me how much they appreciated my co-operative attitude and my ability to calm down the really difficult patients.

   A receptionist also needs to be able to organize. I've been a homemaker for the past 10 years and that means you have to be able to organize the lives of 4 or 5 people all at once.

The Mini-Interview

Employers often use the telephone call as an initial screening of applicants for the job. You may be asked questions like, "Why did you leave your last job?" "When would you be able to start work?" "Why are you interested in working for this company?" or "Why are you interested in this job?" You may also be requested for the names of previous employers or what salary level you would expect. Since questions about earnings and benefits are best left until the actual

interview, you might say something like, "I would prefer to discuss the duties of the job before discussing that question," or, perhaps, that your salary requirements are open. Interview questions and possible answers are described more fully in the following chapter. You may want to read it before making your telephone calls.

Closing Remarks

Your purpose during the phone call is to convince the employer that s/he would be making a mistake not to interview you. Towards the end of your conversation you should ask directly for an interview.

If the answer is yes, be sure to get the details about time and place. Often, however, the employer will cut short your request for a meeting by telling you the process s/he is following. You might be told, for example, that interviews will be scheduled later in the week and you will be called if you are wanted. In these cases make sure you leave your name and phone number. You might add that the position is very interesting to you and that if you don't hear anything in the next couple of days, you will call back if you may. (To improve your chances for an interview, you might send a brief follow-up letter and resumé after the call.)

In your closing remarks, you should also thank the person for speaking with you and reiterate your interest in the position. If possible, address the person by name.

CLOSING REMARKS - 4 EXAMPLES

1. Thank you for this chance to discuss the job, Mr. Singh. Can we arrange a time to get together to discuss my qualifications and your requirements in greater detail?

2. May I drop in today to discuss the position in more detail? My resumé should provide you with more information about my qualifications. What time would be convenient for you?

3. May I bring you a copy of my resumé, Miss Chutworth? It will provide you with more detailed information about my suitability for the position. Would 3:00 p.m. this afternoon be suitable?

4. Thank you for this chance to talk about the opening, Ms. Black. If I don't hear from you before, I'll call back at the end of the week to check on the results of my application. The job sounds interesting and I would like the opportunity to work for your company.

SUMMARY

The telephone is a useful aid in your job search. It can save you hours of walking the streets. But to use it effectively, you must plan each call so that you know who you are calling, what you want to say and what action you expect on the part of the listener. This section has described each part of the telephone application procedure in detail.

PHONE CALL PLANNING AND INFORMATION RECORD

Name of Position Sought: _____

Company Name: _____

Name of Contact: _____

Position: _____ Telephone: _____

Source of Information: _____

Employer Requirements: (if known)_____

_____

_____

YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Specify relevant programmes and courses

_____

_____

_____

Work Experience: Specify general area and specific duties. Use volunteer or part-time experience if relevant:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Qualities: List qualities useful in performing the work of the position you are interested in and give examples to show you have them.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Reason for interest in organization:

_____

Results:

_____

_____

Follow-up: ____None ____Letter ____Resumé ____Interview ____Date: _____

(c) PERSONAL VISITS

The third way to make contact with employers is to make a personal visit to the organization's offices. The effectiveness of this method depends both on the type of job you are looking for and your personality type.

USES OF THE PERSONAL VISIT

Employment Agencies:

To register with employment agencies, it is almost always necessary to make your first visit in person. At the agency office you will be expected to complete an application form and take any tests that they routinely require of their candidates. Then you will have a personal meeting with a counsellor. In this interview, the counsellor will be trying to find out what kind of job you want and your qualifications for the work.

In addition to the first visit, you would be wise to return at weekly intervals. In the public Canada Employment Centres you will want to read the new postings on the Job Information Board. Unfortunately, because of the demands placed on them, Manpower counsellors do not have the time to match already registered applicants with the listings they receive. You will have to do this yourself.

With private agencies, you may find it adequate to keep in touch through weekly telephone conversations. However, your personal appearance on the doorstep will keep your application firmly anchored in your counsellor's mind.

Work Sites:

Many construction and labouring positions are filled each morning by the people who arrive at the work site ready to work. The application procedure often consists of a short conversation with the foreman/woman at the job. There is a high turnover rate in these jobs and it often pays to be in the right place at the right time, dressed and ready to go to work.

Public Relations Departments or Offices of the Division You'd Like To Work In:

If you want to get information about the company or a feeling for the work environment, it can pay off to visit the public relations department. Often, there is a display of their written materials which they will be happy to let you have.

If you decide to visit the manager of the division you would like to work for, you would be wise to call in advance to make sure s/he was planning to be there. During your visit, you should make it clear that you are inquiring about possibilities and that you don't expect a job immediately. If the manager appears interested, you can then go down to the personnel office armed with the knowledge that you can honestly say that the manager of the division would be interested in seeing your application.

Company Personnel Offices:

Many organizations do not advertise openings at the junior managerial, technical, sales or clerical levels because they can fill their requirements from the many applicants who arrive on the doorstep. If you want one of these jobs, your best bet is to follow the crowd. In the personnel office, you will be asked to complete an application form. As well, you may be interviewed by a recruiter.

If possible you should try to get an appointment with an interviewer. Don't just hand your application form to the receptionist and leave. Instead, ask her if you can deliver it to a personnel officer yourself as there are several points about your application that you would like to raise. If this is impossible, at least get the name of the recruiter. Once you have returned home, you can call this person to talk about your application. You may, in fact, decide to call before going down to the office to find out whether there are openings. If there are, you will want to make a personal visit.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PERSONAL VISIT

You should plan your schedule of personal visits by geographic location. Check the addresses in advance, then plan your route so that you avoid retracing your steps.

Be sure to gather all the materials you will need from your files before you leave the house. As well as copies of your personal information package (that includes your resumé), you will need scrap paper, a pen and an eraser or correcting fluid because you will undoubtedly be required to fill in aplication forms.

Check your personal appearance carefully. You should be dressed and groomed for an interview. In fact, you should hope that your personal visits include some interviews with personnel officers at the companies you visit.

Be prepared for the interview. It takes thought and practice to perform well at interviews. In fact, the next chapter is devoted to a discussion of preparation for the interview. Since the personal visit is very similar to the interview, you should read it before setting out on your visits.

The final step in the personal visit is recording your results. Take a few minutes after each contact to make a few notes about what happened and what you should do next. When you return home, file these notes for future reference. If you are called for an interview, you will find them useful in refreshing your memory about what you have already done.

RECORD OF PERSONAL VISITS

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Visit: _____ Application Form Completed: _____ Interview Received: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Follow-up Required: Phone Call ____ Letter ____ Return Visit ____ Other ____

Remarks: _____

EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS METHOD

For many sales, clerical, technical and labouring jobs, the personal visit is the most effective way of finding employment. For professional and managerial jobs, the effectiveness of the method depends very much on your personality. If you are very assertive and self-confident, you may find that the method works well for you. On the other hand, if you are crushed by a brush-off or if personal confrontation or rejection make you feel

worthless, you may find this approach very draining. In this case you would be wise to use it only when the job ad specifies it as the employer's desired method. For those who decide to use this route, the book Job Hunting Secrets and Tactics by Kirby W. Stanat with Partick Reardon (Follett/Westwind: Milwaukee, Wisc; 1977) provides detailed advice.

(d) MAKING CONTACT WITH EMPLOYERS --CONCLUSION

To get a job, you must talk to employers. This chapter has dealt with the three main ways to introduce yourself to possible employers --in writing, by telephone and in person. The method that you will use most often depends both on the type of work you are looking for and your own personality.

Since you will, at some time, have to use all three methods, this chapter has provided general guidelines and specific examples for each type of approach. It is hoped that these examples will help you gain the confidence to conduct your own effective job search.

The purpose of making contact is to land an interview. Whichever method you have used, at some point you will have to meet the potential employer in person for an interview. The following chapter will help you prepare for this event.

Chapter IV / The Interview

The most important part of your contact with each employer is the job interview. If you are seriously being considered for the job, you will be asked to an interview. Whether or not you get the job depends to a large extent on the impression you make at the interview.

The purpose of the interview is to give the employer a chance to decide whether you are the right person for the job and to give you the chance to see whether you would like the job and the company. Many people view the interview as entirely the employer's ball game. This just isn't true. You expect to get more than one job offer. For you, therefore, part of the purpose of the interview is to assess your opinion about the job.

There are three main parts to the interview phase. The first stage is preparing for the interview. This includes finding out about the company, preparing possible answers to interview questions, preparing your personal appearance, and gathering the materials you will need at the interview. The second stage is the actual interview. Here you are trying to convince the employer through your words and behavior that you are the best candidate. The third step in the process is evaluating the interview. You will be trying to assess your performance in order to improve it at the next interview. You will also want to think about the pros and cons of the job itself.

Each of these stages is discussed in this chapter. To help you prepare for, participate in and assess each interview, various checklists and forms have been included. The insights you gain from this chapter will help you improve your interview skills.

(a) PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

To make a good impression at the interview, you must feel confident that the experience will be useful. Unless you are prepared before you walk

into the room you will not feel confident. Therefore, it is important to allow yourself time the day before the interview to get ready.

There are three aspects to getting prepared. You must plan your answers to likely interview questions. You must ensure that your personal appearance is satisfactory. Finally, you must get yourself into a positive frame of mind.

PLANNING THE INTERVIEW CONTENT

Although each interview is, of course, different, they share a similar purpose and content. The employer is trying to find out whether your skills and personality match company needs and you are trying to find whether the job would suit you.

Although the wording varies, the kinds of questions employers ask are fairly standard. They will inquire about your work history and educational background. They will ask you about your personal strengths and weaknesses, your ability to get along with others and your knowledge about the job and the company. To do well at the interview, therefore, you will need to know something about the company and you should have given some thought to possible answers.

Knowing the Organization

You will not impress the employer if you know nothing about the company's services and products. If you apply to Bell Canada and in the interview you cannot say that you know that it is a leader in the telecommunications field, you will look uninformed. Therefore, it is important to learn a little about the organization before the interview.

You need to know what the company's products and services are, something about its history and size, the locations of its branches, and the names of its chief executive officers. This information is available in company publications. You may already have phoned or written to request public relations materials such as annual reports, company newsletters, or recruiting materials. If you have not done so, you should phone the public relations department now and ask your questions. If you are embarrassed to do this, an alternative is to go to your public library and look for company information. Some of the directories mentioned in chapter two supply company information. As

well, trade or professional magazines that cover the field the organization works in are good sources of information. The time spent doing this research is not wasted because the information you find can be used to convince the interviewer of your serious interest in his/her firm.

Since you are more likely to remember information you write down, a "Company Information Record" has been developed for your use. (See next page.) It allows you to note the most important information about the company. You can take completed copies of the record with you and review it on the bus or in the waiting room before the interview.

COMPANY INFORMATION RECORD

Organization Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Division of Interest to You: _____

Manager of Division: _____ Telephone: _____

Personnel Director: _____ Telephone: _____

Type of product or service: _____

Location of Main Office (City) _____

Location of Branches: _____

Name of President or Senior Executives: _____

_____

Size of Organization:

Sales Volume: _____ Assets: _____

No. of Employees _____ Market Share _____

Other: _____

Brief History and Growth Record (Date founded, pattern of growth, diversification)

_____

_____

_____

_____

General Reputation in Field: _____

Media Reports: _____

_____

Company programs, products processes or methods with which you are familiar:

_____

Souce of Information: _____ Type of Position Desired: _____

Called in

Date: _____ Wrote: _____ person _____ Phoned _____

Results: _____

Follow-Up _____

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Answering Employer Questions

In the interview, you will have one hour or less to convince the interviewer that you are the answer to his/her prayers. To do this, you must have considered the employer's needs so that you can show by your answers that you meet them.

The questions interviewers ask are geared to finding out whether your skills and personality fit company requirements. In assessing your qualifications you will be asked questions that deal with your experience, education, achievements, job and company knowledge, and your career goals.

In addition, to try to understand your personality, you will be asked about your attitudes, values, personal strengths and weaknesses, ability to get along with others, and facts about your personal life. It is difficult to give good answers to these kinds of questions on the spur of the moment. Often, a tricky question will throw you off balance. Therefore, on the following pages, sample interview questions are described along with points to consider when preparing your answers. Sometimes possible answers are given. Do not copy them word for word. Use them rather as examples. If you use someone else's words you will not sound convincing; you will sound insincere. At the end of the section there is a short questionnaire that you should complete before each interview. It will help you organize answers for the upcoming interview.

1. DESCRIBING YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Tell me about yourself.	2. What are your qualifications for the position?
3. Describe your background for me.	4. Why should I hire you?

The interviewer wants you to describe those parts of your background that are relevant to the position you are discussing. Your answer will be assessed on how well you organize your facts to show that you understand what would be required of you on the job.

Many people have difficulty answering this type of question because they don't know what kind of information to include.

Basically, the employer is asking "What do you have to offer that is needed in my organization?" It is a request for a sales pitch about you.

Guidelines for Your Answers

Since the question is general, you can use examples from your paid or volunteer work experience, education and personality to show your qualifications. Previous related work experience is your strongest selling point, so begin your answer with that. But go on to show that you have personal qualities such as organizational skills that will be useful.

Your answer should never include the idea that you should be hired because you need a job. This looks like begging and it turns people off. As well, you should avoid talking about personal information such as your family background, your age and your interests and hobbies. You aren't being asked for your life story; you are being requested to talk about yourself as a worker.

2. DESCRIBING YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. What experience do you have in this type of work?	2. Describe your previous jobs.
3. How do you think your previous jobs have qualified you for this position?	4. Which of your previous jobs did you like best? Why? Which did you like least? Why?

The employer is trying to obtain specific information about your work history. At the same time you are being tested on your ability to relate your background to the job in question.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Start your answer with the job that is most closely related to the one you are applying for. Describe those parts of the work duties most likely to form a major part of the job in question. For example, if you have been working as a receptionist and you are applying for a position as a switchboard operator, describe your telephone answering duties first.

If asked to talk about the job you liked least, try to choose the one that is least like the job you are applying for. If you are being considered for a job on an assembly line and you say that you didn't like a job because the work was repetitious, you have talked yourself out of a job. (It is, of course, assumed that you have applied for a job that interests you. If this isn't the case, you would be wise to re-examine your occupational goals.) Remember, no sane employer hires someone to do a job that s/he dislikes because the person is not likely to last long or work well.

3. DESCRIBING YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

TYPICAL QUESTIONS

1. Where did you go to school?
2. How well did you do in school?
3. What education or training do you have that would help in a job like this?
4. What courses did you like best? Do best in ?
5. Which courses did you like least? Do worst in?
6. Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic ability? Why or why not?
7. What subject area did you major in? Why did you choose this area?
8. Have you ever changed your major field of study? From what to what? Why?
9. Did you enjoy going to school?
10. If you could start over, what would you study?

As you probably noticed, very few of these questions can be answered with simple facts. Even those that could are usually followed by ones that ask you to talk about your attitudes and values.

Most employers have a rather ambivalent attitude towards education. On the one hand, they will react negatively to a candidate who claims to have hated school or found it useless because this may reflect a negative attitude towards work, authority or responsibility. On the other hand, they are seldom

looking for ivory-towered intellectuals who believe that the answers to real-life questions are found only in books.

Guidelines to Your Answer

Select from your education courses, programs and problems that relate to the work you are applying for and present them in a positive light. The ease with which you can do this depends on the course you took. For example, if you are trying for a job as a draughtsman/woman and you took courses in draughting, you're all set. If your courses were in History, it is harder to show a connection. You can always say that you learned general skills such as research methods, or developed personal qualities such as diligence or patience or whatever.

The golden rule in answering any interview question is to avoid negative statements. If, for example, your academic record was poor, try to find a positive or neutral reason to explain it.

JIMMY'S STORY

Jimmy, for example, hated school and dropped out as soon as he legally could. During his school years he had done badly, even failing a couple of grades. Some years it seemed he missed more days than he attended. When asked whether he enjoyed school he could hardly say yes. Not only would it be untrue and, therefore, dishonest, but also if the employer checked his school record it would be clear that he was lying, which would in itself finish his chances. What he could and did say was, "To tell you the truth, I didn't like school much. I'm not really inclined that way and I couldn't see the use of a lot of the stuff they taught us. I did like the courses like machine shop and woodworking though. They were practical and gave me a chance to work with my hands."

This answer puts the best possible face on a rather unhappy situation. Notice Jimmy didn't rave about how much he hated the place. Instead, he started with a rather negative statement and moved on to the positive aspects. There is usually something good even about unpleasant experiences. Try to find it and build your answer to include it.

4. DESCRIBING YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. What do you consider to be your greatest achievements?	2. What accomplishments have given you the greatest satisfaction? Why?
3. Describe two or three things you have done really well.	4. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?

Employers want to know whether you can produce results. They also want to find out about your values. By asking about your successes, they can do both at once.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Try to describe achievements that will be related to your new job. A Sales Manager who claims that his/her greatest accomplishment was writing a book on the changes in the river beds of ancient Mesopotamia is likely to get funny looks from the interviewer. Perhaps this applicant should say that his/her greatest achievement was getting a book on such a subject published. That at least would show great sales ability. The rule to follow is to choose an accomplishment that can be related to the job at hand.

With this in mind, you can eliminate successes like marrying the person of your dreams or holding the world record for distance walked backwards. While these may be important to you, they really are private successes.

Everyone has accomplishments. They needn't be earth-shattering but they should show that you have qualities that would make you a successful worker. When you chose your occupational goal, you must have believed that there was something in your personality or experience that made the choice reasonable. This should be the source of a story about a successful experience in your past. In your answer, you should both name the achievement and explain why you think it was successful.

5. DESCRIBING YOUR CAREER GOALS

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?	2. What are your career goals?
3. What are your future plans?	4. What job in this company would you plan to work toward?
5. How can this job help you meet your career goals?	6. What do you really want to do in life?
7. What are your long-range goals? Short-term goals?	8. How have your career goals changed in the past five years?
9. Why did you choose this career?	

Employers believe that the most satisfactory workers are those who have thought about where they are coming from and where they are going. Such people have direction. They are stable. They are motivated. They will probably stay around for a while.

Your answer, therefore, should show that you have thought seriously about your career and have an idea where you are going. You aren't expected to map out a detailed plan with dates attached. Rather you should show that you have decided upon an area of interest and have thought about your plans for advancement.

Guidelines for Your Answer

For example, you might say, "My general area of interest is sales and marketing. In the short-term I hope to obtain a position in your sales department. I expect to spend the first little while learning about your products, services and organization. Over the next five years I would expect to earn two promotions and gain some budgeting and supervisory experience. In the long-term I'm looking to advance as far as possible in the sales and marketing end of things."

Not everyone wants to advance to management roles. If this describes you, you might try an answer like, "I'm a good researcher and I like the work. My goal is to develop a solid reputation in my company as a thorough and productive worker."

It is never wise to say that you have no goals. Don't say that you'll take whatever comes along or do any job that is offered. This clearly shows that you lack direction. If you are unable to think of long-term possibilities now, try to structure your answer to stress your areas of ability. For example, you might say you are looking for a career that will allow you to use your ability.

Then show how the abilities relate to the job you're applying for. Clearly it will be tough to do this unless you've prepared yourself. Your answer should at the very least show that you have taken the time to give some thought to the future.

6. ASSESSING YOUR JOB KNOWLEDGE

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Why are you interested in this job?	2. What qualifications would you look for if you were hiring someone to fill this position?
3. What do you think it takes to be successful in this kind of job?	

The interviewer is, in these questions, testing your knowledge of the work and your ability to analyze the qualities necessary to perform it successfully.

Guidelines for Your Answer

As well as showing that you know what the work consists of, you should try to include information that indicates you have the necessary skills in your answer. If you are in doubt about the work duties or the aptitudes and abilities required, you would be wise to read descriptions of the occupation such as those that can be found in the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations or get a description of the job from the employer's personnel department or from whomever you would work for if you get the job. This book can be obtained at your local CEC or in your local library.

7. ASSESSING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMPANY

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Why do you want to work for us?	2. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
3. Why did you decide to apply to this company?	4. What interests you about our products and services?
5. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company you plan to work for?	6. What do you think it takes to be successful in a company such as this?

Employers prefer to hire people who can show that they have a positive interest in the particular company rather than an interest in just any old job with any old employer. Loyalty to the company is a highly valued attitude. By showing that you have a real interest in the organization, you give the impression that you would become a loyal employee if hired.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Your completed Company Information Record will come in very handy when answering this type of question. If you can show that you know the services, products, history and size of the firm, you are well on your way to success with this question.

As a word of warning, you are strongly advised to avoid an answer which indicates that you feel you should be hired to reform the structure or policies of the company. All this will earn you is the reputation as a troublemaker.

8. ASSESSING YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS PREVIOUS JOBS

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Why did you leave your last job?	2. How does this job differ from your previous ones?
3. Why have you changed your employment so often?	4. How did you get along with your last boss?

Here above all you must avoid being negative. Employers want loyal employees who will stay around for a long time. If you indicate that you aren't loyal to your previous employer, this will be seen as a reflection of your general attitude. If you criticize your former boss, you will severely hurt your chances for the job in question.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Present your reasons for leaving your last job or for changing jobs often in a positive light. Don't say you quit because the work was boring; say, rather, that you are seeking greater challenge in your work. Don't say you were in a dead-end job; say that you are seeking an opportunity to advance to a more senior position. Never, never say you hated your boss. Say that you weren't compatible but that you respect his or her competence and ability.

If you were fired or asked to leave, don't lie about it. Explain the situation calmly without condemning anyone. You would be wise to practice your answer carefully before you are actually faced with the question, otherwise you may get carried away. If the cause of your dismissal was serious, such as theft or destructive behaviour, your answer had better include that you have learned from your mistake, that you regret the situation, and that it will never happen again.

Positive or neutral reasons for leaving a job include: returning to school or college; moving to a new geographic location; the offer of a better job or the recognition of a new field of occupational interest. When preparing your answer, keep in mind these two rules: Don't lie and don't be any more negative than you absolutely have to be.

9. ASSESSING YOUR ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONALITY

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. What are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?	2. How would your friends describe you?
3. Describe yourself.	4. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?

5. What makes you lose your temper?	6. How do you define success?
7. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?	8. In what type of work environment are you most comfortable?
9. Can you work well under pressure?	10. What kind of boss do you prefer?

Employers want to find out whether you will fit into their organization. You may be a good and hard worker, but if your personality or work habits make it difficult for you to get along within the organization, you won't be successful. Since it is costly to train new employees, the interviewer wants to be as sure as possible that you will fit. If, for example, you fall to pieces when the work builds up, neither you nor the employer will be happy if you are put into a job where this happens regularly.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Once again the golden rule is to be positive about yourself. Many people find this difficult because it seems like boasting, and they have been taught that modesty is a virtue. In a job interview, remember, however, that you are your own sales representative. You must be positive about yourself. Also keep in mind that there are two sides to every coin. For example, you can say either that you are stubborn or that you are persistent. One sounds negative, the other is positive. Find the positive adjectives.

It is a good idea to show that you have the qualities typically required in the job. For example, a secretary would be wise to point to his or her accuracy and attention to detail. To help you figure out the kinds of qualities that are preferred, read the typical interest and temperament patterns described in the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations.

Prepare answers to several of the Typical Questions before going to the interview. Try to be honest with yourself. If you describe yourself as outgoing and assertive when you are shy and introverted, you may end up in a job you hate and don't have the personality for.

10. ASSESSING YOUR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE

TYPICAL QUESTIONS

1. Do you prefer to work alone or to work with others?
2. Have you had trouble getting along with co-workers? supervisors? sub-ordinates?
3. Can you take instructions or criticism without feeling upset?
4. Is it an effort for you to get along with people whose background or opinions are different from yours?
5. Could you work for someone of the opposite sex? Someone of different racial origin? Someone younger than yourself?
6. What kind of relationship do you think should exist between you and your supervisor?

An important part of satisfactory work performance is the ability to get along with the people at work. From the employer's point of view, the best worker is not always the one who works hardest or produces most. The best employee is the one who gets along well with other staff at the same time as producing results.

Guidelines for Your Answer

Therefore, your answers about your human relations skills should seek to show that you are a friendly and co-operative person. Compliments from previous employers or co-workers can be referred to and examples of co-operative behavior in previous work experiences can be described. For example, you might mention (if it were true) that your previous boss praised you for your willingness to pitch in and help when there was a sudden rush of work in the department.

If you have had a lot of trouble getting along with people at work, you should avoid saying critical or hostile things about them at the job interview. You would also do well to examine your past behavior and try to change it. Otherwise you may well be looking for another job again soon.

11. DISCUSSING EARNINGS AND BENEFITS

TYPICAL QUESTIONS	
1. Which do you consider to be more important, making a lot of money or doing work you find interesting?	2. What kinds of rewards do you expect to gain from working?
3. What are your ideas on salary?	4. What salary do you expect to be making in five years?
5. What salary do you expect to receive?	6. What were you earning at your last job?

Employers know that people work because they want money. They wouldn't respect someone who was willing to do the job for nothing. On the other hand, they want to find someone who is interested in the work itself. They will be put off by an applicant who makes it clear that his or her only interest is the money.

Therefore, you should avoid raising questions about earnings and benefits until towards the end of the interview. If, however, the employer raises the question, you should be ready with an answer.

Guidelines to Your Answer

You will want your answer about salary to be realistic. Therefore, as part of your research about the job, you should look into the going rates for workers in your chosen occupational area. A careful reading of the want ads in the paper should give you a good idea about this. As well, some career information provides an earnings range for the occupation. An example is the Careers Provinces series published by CEIC. The Department of Labour also publishes salary ranges for a limited number of occupations in its publication entitled Wage Rates, Salaries and Hours of Work. This series of booklets should be available at your library.

Quite often, the earnings range for the occupation will be specified in the want ad. In these cases, if you are asked about your salary requirements, you would do well to indicate a salary in the upper end of the range. If the job were

advertised as paying between $9,000 and $11,000, you might say that your range is $10,000 to $12,000. This should encourage the employer to make you an offer in the top part of the scale.

Sometimes an employer will raise the money question very early in the interview. If you wish to avoid discussing the topic until later, you might try an answer like, "Before I can make an accurate assessment of the salary question, I would like to know more about the duties of the position." If you feel uncomfortable raising your own figure first, ask the interviewer what the earnings range is. Or try an answer like, "I expect to receive a salary commensurate with my qualifications and performance. I am sure that your salary scale is competitive and that any offer you make will be fair."

From your point of view, the best time to discuss salary is <u>after</u> you have received a job offer. At this time you are in a much better bargaining position. As well, if you appear overly eager about money, you risk not being offered the job at all.

12. PERSONAL INFORMATION

In addition to questions about your work-related personality, the interviewer may ask you questions about your personal life. Before you get mad and refuse to answer, take a moment to reflect on why you are being asked. Rarely do interviewers ask questions out of a sense of morbid curiosity. They believe your answers will tell them more about your employability.

Human Rights legislation makes it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race or religion. If you feel that the questions you are being asked are discriminatory, you can refuse to answer them. If you feel very strongly about the issue, you can make a complaint to the Human Rights Commission. On the other hand, if you make a big scene during the interview, you are unlikely to get the job. If a question offends you, try to deflect it by giving a general answer.

General Guidelines for Your Answer

For example, if you are asked questions about your financial status, such as whether you have any debts, you might say that you are financially secure or that you are able to meet your obligations. If the interviewer insists, you might try a

statement like, "I'd prefer not to answer that," or "I don't understand how this question relates to the job in question." Another way to say the same thing is a response such as, "I think I'll pass on that question."

Try to avoid getting angry. Statements like "I refuse to answer that question," "How dare you ask me such a thing," or "That is none of your business," serve only to worsen the situation. Try to turn the question aside politely but firmly.

On the next page is a list of commonly asked personal questions. You would be wise to read the list carefully and prepare an answer to each one. Several of the questions may offend you. You are advised to think now about how you would deal with them. If you decide to refuse to answer them prepare a polite way to do so. Otherwise, you may suddenly be hit with one of them at the interview and answer without thinking. Afterwards you will want to kick yourself for saying anything. By foreseeing the situation you will save yourself both regrets and awkward moments.

PERSONAL INFORMATION QUESTIONS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT WANT TO ANSWER

Mobility

1. Do you like to travel?
2. Would you be willing to travel?
3. How much travel have you done?
4. Are you willing to relocate?
5. How would your family feel about moving to a new location?

Transportation

1. Do you own your own car?
2. Do you have a car you can use regularly?
3. Do you have a driver's licence?
4. How do you plan to get to work?

Leisure Activities

1. What are your hobbies?
2. How do you spend your spare time?
3. Do you participate in sports? Which ones?
4. Are you involved in community or volunteer activities?

Physical Health

1. Do you have any physical disabilities that would interfere with your ability to perform the duties of this job?
2. Have you been hospitalized for physical or emotional illness in the past two years? What was the problem? Have you been cured or has the condition stabilized?
3. How often were you absent from work or school because of illness during the past year?
4. Have you ever lost a job because of overindulgence in alcohol or drugs?
5. Have you ever had any serious illness or injury?
6. Have you missed work because you were hungover during the past year?
7. How often do you use drugs or alcohol?

Legal Situation

1. Do you have a criminal record?
2. Have you ever been bonded?
3. Have you ever been refused bonding or had a bond revoked?
4. Are you involved in any legal proceedings at the present time?

13. Often, towards the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions. Quite often you will. They will have arisen naturally in the course of the interview. However, there are many times when you haven't thought of anything to ask. You can just say you have no questions and prepare to leave. Don't feel uncomfortable about this; the interviewer is simply demonstrating a genuine interest in you.

The Interview Questions Checklist

The preceding pages have described dozens of possible questions and answers. To help you prepare your own interview answers, an "Interview Questions Checklist" has been included on the following pages.

Before beginning your answers, you will need your copy of the job ad, if there was one, and copies of your letters of application or the notes from your telephone conversation or personal visit. As well, if you are not entirely sure what the job involves, an occupational description from a Careers Provinces leaflet or the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO) will prove useful.

On the checklist, make notes about the facts you plan to tell about yourself. Don't try to write out complete answers, just make short lists. Then practise your answers aloud.

If you are nervous about the interview, it may help to get a friend to play the role of the interviewer. Then run through the questions and answers quickly with them. If you feel shy about doing this, you might use a tape recorder to practise with. By listening to yourself you will get an idea of how you sound to others. This will help you improve your oral communications skills.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

1. Qualifications:

(a) List and Describe Related Work Experience: _____

_____

_____

_____

(b) List and Describe Related Education: _____

_____

_____

(c) List and Describe Two Major Successes Relevant to Position in Question:

_____

_____

_____

2. Career Goals:

(a) What Occupational Area Interests You? _____

(b) Long range career goal? _____

_____

(c) Short term goal? _____

_____

3. Job Knowledge:

Typical Job Duties: _____

_____

4. Attitudes:

(a) Reason for leaving last job: _____

_____

(b) Describe your strengths: _____

_____

(c) Describe your weaknesses: _____

_____

(d) Describe your relations with co-workers: _____

_____

_____

What are your earnings requirements? _____

List questions you have about the job or the organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

PREPARING YOUR APPEARANCE

The second major aspect of preparing for the interview is preparing your personal appearance. Since, rightly or wrongly, you will be judged on how you look, it is important that you present an attractive appearance. This doesn't mean you have to be beautiful. It means that your clothing must be neat and suitable and that your grooming must be above reproach. Both these issues were discussed at some length in chapter II. (See Preparing Your Personal Appearance, pp. 12 to 14.) In general, your clothing and grooming should be a bit more dressy than it would be for a day at work in the job in question.

FINAL PREPARATIONS

The third element in a successful interview is self-confidence. You need to be fresh and relaxed. Plan to get a good night's sleep before the interview. You will increase your self-confidence if you feel attractive. On the day of the interview, spend plenty of time on your clothing and grooming. Finally, if you have the materials you need, you will feel more sure of yourself. Be sure to take your personal information package (which includes your resumé); your company information record and interview questions checklist; and copies of the want ad and your correspondence. As well, you will need a pen and paper, some money and the information about the interview site and the interviewer. Allow yourself plenty of time to get to the specified location.

(b) PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERVIEW

The impression you make in the first few minutes of the interview is crucial. It has been estimated that most interviewers make their decision not to hire an applicant within the first five minutes. Obviously, then, you are not being judged, at the outset, on your qualifications for the job. Rather you are being assessed in terms of your appearance, attitude and manner.

Your attitude and manner--the way you walk into a room, the way you shake hands, whether you smile or look sullen or scared--all form a part of the initial impression. If the employer senses that you aren't interested in the job, that you are overly aggressive or that you seem confused and disorganized, s/he will react negatively to you. The way you speak also forms part of the initial reaction. No matter what you say, if you say it in a dull, flat monotone or if you shout or speak very loudly, you will

make a poor impression. If there is a conflict between what you say and how you say it, for example if you assert that you are very interested in the job in a dull and leaden tone, people tend to believe the tone.

Practically everyone is somewhat nervous in an interview situation. Interviewers don't expect you to be totally cool, calm and collected. They do expect, though, that you will try to control your nervousness and that you will show an attitude of confidence in your ability to do the job. If you don't believe in yourself, it is unlikely that the interviewer will. Self-confidence is increased if you are well prepared, which is why you would be wise to read the first section of the chapter carefully. It is also increased if you know what to expect and have some guidelines for your behavior. This section will talk about types of interviews and appropriate interview behavior.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Although the purpose of all interviews is ultimately the same, to select a candidate for a job, they may be conducted in a variety of ways. There may be a brief initial interview to weed out the group followed by more in-depth interviews with two or three serious candidates. You may be faced with a group of three or four interviewers, or you may be taken around to meet several people in the organization. The most common interview types are described briefly below.

Screening Interviews

Employers often decide to interview 10 or more of the leading candidates for a position briefly. From this group, two or three will be selected for more intensive questionning at a later interview session.

The screening interview is usually brief. It rarely lasts more than 30 minutes, usually less. Generally, you would be asked a few general questions about your education and experience but they would not tend to be probing. There would be some questions about your attitudes and values, but detailed questions about your career plans, future goals and personal life would be kept at a general level. You may be asked for a brief explanation of your interest in the organization, but you are not expected to give a full blown sales pitch.

Most commonly, screening interviews are conducted by professional recruiters or personnel officers. If you succeed in convincing them that you are a worthy candidate, your second interview would typically be held with someone in the department in which you would be hired.

Selection Interviews

This is the most common type of interview, particularly for jobs at the junior level. It is usually conducted by the person who will make the final hiring decision.

Selection interviews may last for an hour or more. The questions you will be asked cover the entire range of interview questions. In addition to asking about your education, experience, attitudes and values, you will be queried closely on your knowledge of the job. The job itself will probably be described in some detail and you should show through your answers that you feel very confident about your ability to do the work.

One section in the selection interview is devoted to discussing the hours, earnings and benefits and the working conditions. If you have questions about these issues, therefore, you should discuss them at that point. Try to emphasize that the job itself is just as important to you as the rewards you expect to receive.

In a selection interview, the employer plans to see each applicant only once. The final hiring decision will be based on the results of this interview.

Selection Boards

In many cases, especially for government jobs and professional and managerial positions, the interview will take the form of a selection board. In the interview, you will be faced with two or more interviewers all of whom will be asking you questions and assessing your answers. Some selection boards are very formal. All candidates will be asked the same set of questions. Others are less structured and the questions seem to arise naturally out of the conversation.

Interviews with a selection board are usually reasonably lengthy since everyone wants to get some questions in. The questions cover the entire range of typical interview questions, but they are often quite probing. Probably less emphasis will be placed on issues such as

hours, salary and benefits. These would be discussed more fully later with the candidate who was selected for the position.

Many people find interviews with selection boards a trying experience. You feel, and are, very much on the spot. While you answer one question, you can feel everyone sitting, in seemingly hostile judgment, over you. The best advice is to keep your cool. Don't rush into an answer, take your time.

Stress Interviews

Sometimes interviewers conduct what are called stress interviews. The questioner appears hostile or aggressive towards you and fires questions like a drill sergeant. The questions themselves may be inappropriate or highly personal.

You are being tested on your ability to react under pressure. It is very important not to lose your temper or buckle under, and answer whatever is asked. You should politely refuse to answer the personal questions, and refuse to get rattled when the interviewer tries to catch you up in inconsistencies with your previous answers.

Fortunately, this type of interview is rare. It is used mainly to interview people competing for high pressure jobs. If you do encounter this technique, however, remember that the rule of thumb is not to lose your cool.

Bad Interviews

It is very possible that some or several of your interviewers will turn out to be poor interviewers. Either they will talk themselves during the entire interview, or they will appear confused or without direction. Many of the people who interview won't be professional interviewers. They don't have a clear idea about the types of qualifications they are looking for. In the end, they will tend to hire the person they liked best because they have no rational basis for making a choice.

There is very little you can do if you hit a situation like this. Your attitude and manner become vitally important; you must appear friendly and interested. If at all possible, you can try to lead the interview in the direction you would like it to go by summarizing your qualifications. In the bad interview, it is even more important to be

prepared than in the good one. If you have taken the time to figure out the types of qualifications that would be required, you are probably one step ahead of the interviewer. If you can let the interviewer know that you have a good idea of what his or her needs are, you may well get yourself the job.

TAKING EMPLOYMENT TESTS

As part of the interview process, you may be asked to take some standard employment tests. These range from aptitude and intelligence tests, to personality assessments, to skills tests in such areas as typing, shorthand or machine operation. Tests can be more specialized. One young woman, who was seeking a job as a newspaper reporter, was asked to conduct a mock interview and write up the story as part of the interview. Another who was applying for a job designing geography projects for elementary grades was given some leaves and nuts and asked to design a simple project to introduce these items to students.

Many people feel very nervous when asked to take tests. They are afraid they will do badly or that they will show things about themselves they wouldn't want anyone to know.

The best advice about tests is not to treat them too seriously. You will never be judged solely on the basis of test results and no-one expects you to do perfectly or even outstandingly well.

Try to relax before taking a test. It is not necessary to bone up. This will usually only make you more anxious. The only exception to this rule is taking skills tests. If, for example, you haven't typed for a while, you would be wise to practice beforehand. If you know you are going to be tested, your best bet is to get a good night's sleep and arrive at the interview well rested. Since you should do this before any interview, you should have no difficulty.

During the test itself, spend your time trying to answer the questions to the best of your ability rather than trying to second guess the test. Many tests, especially interest and personality tests, have built-in checks. If you spend time trying to outwit the tester, you will probably only outwit yourself. If you feel that you are a normal, pleasant person of average intelligence, your test results aren't likely to reveal that you are a hidden monster or a dummy.

THE PARTS OF THE INTERVIEW

Although the interviewer almost always decides in the first five minutes if s/he is going to reject you, the final decision to hire you will not be made until after several candidates have been interviewed. To help you understand the interview process, the typical interview has been divided into four main stages which are described below.

The Introductory Stage

The first few moments of the interview are spent assessing your appearance and attitude. The interviewer will look you over carefully and silently, answering the questions "Are you well groomed? Is your clothing suitable? Do you look well turned out?" As well, s/he will probably try to help you relax by making small talk about the weather, the traffic and the like. At this point you are being assessed on your ability to control your nervousness and to respond appropriately in a social situation.

The Employer Questions Stage

During the bulk of the interview, the interviewer will try to draw you out on the subject of your qualifications, your attitudes and values, and your reasons for interest in the job and the company. It is in this stage that the questions discussed earlier in the chapter will be asked. You are expected to sell the interviewer on the reasons why you should be hired over any of the other candidates.

Questions here can be either open or closed. Closed questions are those that can be answered in a simple sentence. "Where did you go to school? or "How much did you earn at your last job?" are examples of closed questions. When the interviewer wants to get you to talk, s/he will ask open-ended questions, such as "Tell me about yourself." Obviously, a one or two-word answer will not do here. And never, never say "Well, there's not much to tell." The employer wants you to talk about your qualifications and, if you want the job, you should do so.

Since this is a formal conversation that is played by the interviewer's rules, you should follow his or her lead. If s/he tends to talk a lot, don't interrupt. If, on the other hand, the interviewer is the type who would rather listen, be prepared to talk yourself.

The Applicant Questions Stage

Towards the end of the interview you may be asked whether you have any questions. Feel free to ask questions that show an informed interest in procedures, machinery or other aspects of the work; this is not the time to ask about pay, hours or benefits. If no appropriate questions occur to you, its fine to say you have none and wait for the interviewer to indicate the interview is over.

The Closing Stage

When the interviewer hints that the interview is drawing to a close, you should prepare to leave promptly. Be alert to cues such as straightening up of papers, closing file folders or statements like, "Well, if that's about all...". Don't try to drag out the interview. This will only irritate the employer. If there is something you must mention, do so briefly. As you are leaving, thank the interviewer by name, stress your interest in the job, and ask when you can expect a response. Then leave.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEW BEHAVIOR

Arrive on time or shortly before the specified hour.

Never be late for an interview. If you are, you almost certainly won't get the job. If you are going to be unavoidably detained (for example you broke your leg on the way to the interview and have landed up in the hospital) phone before the time for your interview and explain the situation. Ask the employer to arrange another time and be there, no matter what time is suggested.

Be polite to everyone you come in contact with.

When you arrive at the interview location, introduce yourself to the receptionist politely and follow the instructions s/he gives you. It is a virtue always to be polite; in the interview situation, it is a practical necessity. It is possible that the receptionist will have a

role in the interview because s/he may be asked to describe your behavior when you arrived.

While waiting for the interview, sit quietly without diversions.

Do not distract yourself by smoking a cigatette, looking at your notes or reading a magazine. If you do, when the interviewer arrives you will have to spend a few moments sorting yourself out and the interviewer won't be impressed. Your mind won't be in gear and it will show. So sit quietly with your hands neatly folded in your lap and your papers neatly tucked away in your briefcase. Use the time to mentally review your qualifications for the job and your reasons for interest in the organization.

Follow the lead of the interviewer.

If s/he offers to shake hands, do so. If you are motioned to lead the way, go ahead. Wait to be seated until you are asked to do so.

During the interview, try to appear relaxed.

Don't fidget with your clothes, hair, papers, etc. Don't smoke unless the interviewer invites you to. The interviewer expects you to be slightly nervous, but if your behavior makes him or her nervous in response, the interview won't go well. Remember, the interviewer isn't an ogre, s/he is just another human being.

By your manner and tone of voice, show that you are interested.

Sit up straight and lean slightly forward. Look directly at the interviewer both when speaking and when being spoken to. Smile when it is appropriate. Look serious when asked a penetrating question. When talking, put some expression into your voice. Avoid speaking in a monotone or in a sarcastic tone. Speak at a reasonable level--neither shouting or whispering. No matter what you say, if you whisper you sound shy and fearful; if you shout you sound aggressive. Remember, if there is a conflict between what you say and how you say it, people will automatically believe your body language (i.e. how you said it), not your words.

Answer the questions you are asked.

Don't be long-winded, but avoid one- or two-word answers. Try to make your responses suitable to the question. That is, if the employer asks about your education, don't begin by talking about your work experience. If you don't understand what the question means, ask for clarification.

Leave promptly when the interview is over.

When the interviewer indicates by subtle cues that the interview is over, do not drag out the interview. In leaving, thank the interviewer by name, emphasize your interest in the job and leave.

FINAL HINTS

Since practice makes perfect, go to all the interviews you are offered even if you aren't particularly interested in the job. You are more likely to be relaxed in this type of situation, because you aren't terribly worried about the outcome. By getting experience in the interview situation, you will improve your chances of participating successfully in the interviews for the jobs you really would like.

In any interview, it is an absolutely fatal error to beg for the job. Statements like, "I really need this job," "Please hire me," or "I don't know what I'll do if I don't get this job,," will cook your goose. This kind of thing turns employers off. They don't owe you anything, and if you try to make them feel guilty or selfish you can be guaranteed that they won't hire you.

(c) EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

Even when the interview is over, you have not finished the interview process. Now is the time to spend a little while going over what happened. Even if you think you did terribly, don't just write off the experience. See if you can figure out what went wrong so you won't make the same mistakes again. If you think you did well, you should still assess your performance. Almost every interview can be improved and you should take a few minutes to think about how. You will also want to note the things you

did well so you can do them again at the next interview. The following pages will outline how to evaluate your performance.

MAKING NOTES ABOUT THE INTERVIEW

As soon as possible after the interview, you should make some notes about what went on. Your notes should include the name of the interviewer, the name of the position applied for and the date of the interview. You should note important information such as salary and benefits being offered, hours of work, starting date for the job, and the date that the hiring decision will be made. If it was suggested that you return for an interview on another day, make a note of the time and place of the second interview.

You should make a brief list of the topics that were discussed. This will help you become aware of whether you covered the information that would prove you were a good candidate. For example, if your educational background is exceptionally good and the topic wasn't discussed at the interview, you made an error. Your follow-up letter (discussed in the next chapter) can include this information. The following form is an example of an interview summary. You may find it helpful.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Job Title: _____ Date of Interview: _____
Name of Interviewer: _____ Telephone: _____
Salary and Benefits: _____
Hours of Work: _____ Starting Date: _____
Decision Date: _____ Second Interview: _____
TOPICS DISCUSSED:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Follow-Up Letter Sent?

EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

As well as making notes about the contents of the interview, you should try to analyze how well you performed. Your purpose is to assess how well you

did in order to do a better job the next time. To help you with your assessment, an "Interview Evaluation Checklist" has been provided (see page 122). After each interview, answer the questions on this form. It will help you assess your interview strengths and weaknesses. When completing the form, try to be objective. Put yourself in the interviewer's shoes and answer as you think s/he saw you.

To help you understand how the interviewer is assessing you, a sample Interviewer's Rating Sheet has been included. After each interview, personnel officers fill out sheets like these. As you can see, the major focus is on your attitude, appearance and personality. These are the main things that employers use interviews to find out. Your resumé or application has already been read and you were chosen from among many candidates because your paper qualifications looked good. In the interview, the interviewer is trying to assess whether your personality suits you for the opening.

Don't feel depressed if you don't think you would fall into the outstanding rank in each category. As long as you are average in everything and above average in some, you should have no major difficulties. If only outstanding applicants were ever hired, there would always be a lot of vacant jobs.

RECORD KEEPING

You should file your completed interview summary and your interview evaluation checklist along with your notes or letter of application and the materials you prepared for the interview. Then if you are called for a second interview, or if you are offered the job, you will have the materials necessary to plan your next step. For the second interview, your notes will remind you about what was covered previously and any areas of weakness that you would like to improve at the next interview. If you are offered the job, you can use the materials to assess whether you really want to take the position.

INTERVIEWER'S RATING SHEET

APPEARANCE Poor grooming, hair unsuitable, clothing untidy or dirty ☐	Somewhat untidy, careless about appearance ☐	Satisfactory Appearance ☐	Good taste in clothes better than average appearance ☐	Extremely well dressed and groomed ☐
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS Appeared distant, aloof or truculent ☐	Shy, cool, reserved, but polite ☐	Reasonably approachable and friendly ☐	Warm, friendly, outgoing ☐	Extremely good social skills ☐
SELF-CONFIDENCE Ill at ease, very nervous, fidgety ☐	Somewhat nervous and tense ☐	About average nervousness ☐	Seemed reasonably self-confident ☐	Very self-assured and confident ☐
PERSONALITY Dull, boring uninteresting ☐	Somewhat dull and flat ☐	Satisfactory ☐	Pleasant, likeable ☐	Enthusiastic, likeable, outgoing ☐
VERBAL COMMUNICATION Monotonous voice, says very little ☐	Tries to express him/herself but does so poorly ☐	Average fluency and expressiveness ☐	Good speech pattern and tone ☐	Very expressive, fluent and lively ☐
ALERTNESS Very slow to catch on ☐	Rather slow, requires repetition ☐	Understands and responds with average ability ☐	Quick to catch on, responds appropriately ☐	Very quick, keen, responses ☐
KNOWLEDGE OF JOB Little or no knowledge of field ☐	Poor to fair knowledge of field ☐	Average knowledge ☐	Fairly well informed ☐	Excellent knowledge of field ☐
EXPERIENCE No related experience ☐	Work experience poorly related ☐	Average amount of related experience ☐	Good background and related experience ☐	Excellent background and experience ☐
INITIATIVE Shows no initiative ☐	Shows initiative only about practical issues ☐	Takes some initiative ☐	Initiates relevant conversation well ☐	Excellent ability to initiate ☐

(continued on next page)

GOALS Poorly defined goals, seems to lack purpose ☐	Goals narrowly defined or vague ☐	Has reached goals set at moderate levels ☐	Has high goals & has worked hard to meet them ☐	Has set high goals and has reached or exceeded them ☐
ATTITUDE TO JOB Just another job, appears uninterested ☐	Indifferent about work, interested in pay and benefits ☐	Not excited about job but might develop interest ☐	Interested in job but probably prefers others ☐	Extremely interested in job and seems sold on company ☐

Would you recommend hiring the person?

☐ Definitely, first choice
☐ Yes, among top 5 candidates
☐ Perhaps, could perform the work
☐ Completely unsuitable

INTERVIEW EVALUATION CHECKLIST

1. Did I have the necessary materials with me?
   1. Writing materials..... ___Yes No ____
   2. Personal information package containing resumé, documents, portfolio or work samples, letters or lists of references..... ___Yes No ____

2. Did I arrive on time?..... ___Yes No ____

3. Was I courteous to everyone I dealt with?..... ___Yes No ____

4. Did I know the interviewer's name and use it correctly? ___Yes No ____

5. Did I give positive signals about my interest in the position? ..... ___Yes No ____
   (a) Did I show interest, eagerness and enthusiasm in my body language by sitting up and leaning forward?... ___Yes No ____
   (b) Was my tone of voice pleasant, and easy for the interviewer to hear?..... ___Yes No ____
   (c) Did I look at the interviewer both when speaking and when being spoken to?..... ___Yes No ____
   (d) Did I fidget or appear nervous?..... ___Yes No ____
   (e) Did I show that I was listening by answering the question that was asked?..... ___Yes No ____
   (f) Did I control my annoyance when dealing with irrelevant questions or interruptions?..... ___Yes No ____

6. Did I answer all the questions put to me adequately?... ___Yes No ____
   (a) Did I demonstrate my qualifications in the areas of
      (1) Educational Background..... ___Yes No ____
      (2) Work Experience..... ___Yes No ____
      (3) Accomplishments..... ___Yes No ____
      (4) Career plans and goals..... ___Yes No ____
      (5) Knowledge of the Company..... ___Yes No ____
      (6) Knowledge of the Job in Question..... ___Yes No ____
   (b) Did I answer all questions honestly?..... ___Yes No ____
   (c) Did I convince the employer that I was qualified?.. ___Yes No ____
   (d) Which questions did I have most trouble answering adequately?

_____

_____

_____

7. Did I ask relevant questions when given the opportunity to do so?..... ___Yes No ____

8. What were my greatest strengths in the interview?

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. What were my greatest areas of weakness?

_____

_____

_____

10. Did the interviewer do a good job working with me?.....? ___Yes No ____
If no, what went wrong? _____

_____

11. How would I assess my overall performance? _____Poor _____Adequate
_____Good _____Excellent

12. How could I have improved this interview?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(d) THE INTERVIEW --SUMMARY

The interview phase has three parts. First is preparation. Throughout this chapter, the importance of preparing yourself has been stressed. This involves learning about the company, preparing answers to typical interview questions, ensuring that your clothes and grooming are excellent, and getting yourself into a positive frame of mind.

The second stage is actually participating in the interview. The types of interviews were outlined, the typical parts of each interview were described and guidelines for interview behavior were provided. In the interview, your appearance and attitude are crucial to success.

The third phase is evaluating your performance. By making notes about what happened and by assessing your performance, you will help yourself improve your interview techniques.

However, you are not quite finished with the application procedure yet. There is one more thing to do: follow it up. This stage is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter V / Follow-up Procedures

The job search process does not finish with the interview. You can still influence the interviewer's decision through a follow-up letter or phone call. After the date that a decision was promised, you should call to discover what the results were. If you receive a job offer, you should evaluate it carefully to see whether or not it meets your needs. You must then let the employer know your decision. Finally, once you have accepted a job, you should let other employers know and you should thank the people who helped you during your job search. Each of these topics will be discussed in this chapter.

(a) KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH EMPLOYERS

THANKING THE INTERVIEWER

Interviewers may see a dozen or more candidates for one position. Especially if you were one of the first interviewed, the interviewer's recollection of your application may be hazy by the end of the process. And, if the employer is teetering between a couple of candidates, you would want to tip the scales in your favour.

One effective method to draw attention to your application is to write or phone to thank the interviewer for considering you. Because so few people do this, you create a very positive impression of yourself in the employer's mind. It also gives you a chance to bring out any information that was overlooked during the interview.

You will probably find it easier to express your thanks in writing than by phone. However, if you have a letter phobia, a phone call will do just as well. In either case, you will want to thank the interviewer for his or her time, stress your interest in the job, mention additional information that wasn't covered in the interview, and ask to be told the results of the competition.

GUIDELINES FOR THE LETTER

1. The letter should be short; never more than one page.

2. Make sure that all names and addresses are spelled correctly. Mistakes here will undo most of the good the letter should accomplish.

3. Contents: In the opening sentence, refer to the date of the interview and thank the interviewer for his/her time. In the middle paragraph, stress your interest in and qualifications for the position. Refer to the interview conversation if possible. You may introduce additional information that supports your application. In the closing paragraph, say that you are awaiting an answer or suggest a date that you will call to find out the results.

4. The letter should be typed on good quality, 8½ x 11 white paper with a matching envelope. It should follow a standard business format and the tone should be formal.

5. The letter should be sent no more than two days after the interview, and preferably on the same day.

THANK-YOU LETTER--EXAMPLE

1 Sleepy Hollow,
Anytown, Prov.,
A1B 2C3
1 April 1980

Ms. Ransom, Personnel Director,
XYZ Company, Inc.,
123 Industrial Ave.,
Anytown, Prov.
D4E 5F6

Dear Ms. Ransom:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the position of statistical clerk on Tuesday, March 15, 1980.

As you described it, the work sounds challenging. I believe that my numerical ability, as shown by my high grades in mathematics, and my eye for detail would make me an effective candidate for this job. I would enjoy the duties, especially the chance to prepare charts and graphs as we discussed.

I look forward to hearing the results of your decision. Once again, thank you for considering my application.

Yours sincerely,

Kamal Nesrallah

DISCOVERING THE DECISION

A week or so after the interview, or the day after a decision was promised, you should call the employer to find out the results if you haven't heard anything. Don't just assume that the employer's silence means that you didn't get the job. It may be that the employer has not yet made a decision. In a case like this, your call may be enough to tip the scales

in your direction. The employer could be waiting for a response from the first choice candidate before turning down the other applicants. You may still have a chance if the chosen individual decides to reject the offer. Even if you are turned down, you are better off calling to find out rather than wondering what the silence means. If you have been interviewed, you have a right to know the results. If you aren't notified, this is poor manners or personnel policy on the part of the organization. Don't worry about embarrassing your contact in the company, s/he owes you an answer.

When you call to inquire about the results of your application, your conversation should be brief. If you are turned down, be prepared to accept the rejection in a business-like manner.

DISCOVERING THE DECISION--EXAMPLES

YOU: Good morning, Ms. Ransom, this is Kamal Nesrallah calling. Last Tuesday we discussed my application for the position of Statistical Clerk. I'm very interested in the position, and I was wondering if you had reached a decision yet.

INTERVIEWER: Ah yes, Mr. Nesrallah, of course I remember you. I'm pleased to hear that you are still interested. Unfortunately, we haven't made our final decision yet. We are hoping to finalize our plans by this coming Friday. I'll let you know the results then.

OR

INTERVIEWER: Hello, Mr. Nesrallah. Thank you for calling. We have made our selection, and unfortunately, you haven't been chosen for the position. I hope you find something else soon.

YOU: Thank you very much for considering me, Ms. Ransom. Goodbye.

(b) DEALING WITH JOB OFFERS

EVALUATING THE JOB OFFER

"Well, finally!" you may think when the first job arrives, and without thinking further, you accept it. Don't. Think a bit about the job first. Was it your first choice? How are your other applications coming along? Are there companies you expect to hear from soon? Are you satisfied with the benefits and working conditions? All these questions should be taken into account before making your final decision.

There are several ways to evaluate the job offer. One way is to list all the pros and cons in two columns on a sheet of paper. This helps you see clearly the factors that are involved in making the decision. Once you have made the list, rank them in order of importance to you. If the negatives outweigh the positives, you would do well to think of turning the offer down. If the job decision is going to affect your family, don't forget to include them in the decision-making process. If you change their lives without consultation, they will resent you for it.

Another way to evaluate an offer is to make a list of factors that are important to you on the job. Then compare how well the job matches your desires in each category. An example of this type of evaluation form is given on the next page. You can use it as is, or you can create your own categories if the ones used here don't seem relevant to you.

Remember, though, that these methods serve only to help you organize your thoughts. They will not make the decision for you. Feelings or intuition play an important role here. If you have really negative feelings about a job, even if you can't pin down your reasons, you should listen. They are probably telling you something important.

JOB OFFER EVALUATION FORM

How important is each of these categories to you in your job? Rate them on a scale from 1 to 4.

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____
Not at all imp. of little imp. somewhat imp. very imp.

You can use these columns to rate either one or two jobs at a time. In the space provided list the facts about the job. Then decide, on a scale from 1 to 4, how well the facts match your preferences.

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____
No Match Poor Match Average Match Good Match

CATEGORIES OF SATISFIERS		JOB OFFER A			JOB OFFER B		
FACTORS TO CONSIDER	RANK	KNOWN FACTS ABOUT POSITION	(MATCH) RATING	TOTAL JOB A	KNOWN FACTS ABOUT POSITION	(MATCH) RATING	TOTAL JOB B
1. Interest in occupational area							
2. Interest in Work Duties							
3. Position Level							
4. Advancement Possibilities							
5. Wages/Benefits							
6. Hours							
7. Working Conditions							
8. Interpersonal Relations							
9. Long-term Security							
10. Travel Requirements							
11. Geographic Location							

If you wish to arrive at a numerical score, multiply the rank of the category by the rating for the job. This will give extra weight to the factors that you consider to be most important.

COMMUNICATING YOUR DECISION TO THE EMPLOYER

There are four possible outcomes to your analysis of the suitability of the job offer. You can decide to accept it, reject it, or you can decide that you would accept it with modifications. In this latter case, you will have to negotiate with the employer. You may also wish to put off making a decision for a few days. Whatever your decision, you will have to communicate it to the employer.

You can let the employer know the results either verbally or in writing. As a rule of thumb, if the offer was made to you verbally, a verbal response is sufficient. If you received the offer in writing, you should write your response. The following pages contain examples of letters to deal with each of the four situations described above. If you decide to communicate verbally, your response should contain the same information as the letters.

LETTERS OF ACCEPTANCE

The letter should follow the standard rules of business letter writing. That is, it should follow a standard business format, it should be typed neatly and without errors on good quality 8½ x 11 white paper and its tone should be formal and polite.

In the opening paragraph you should express your appreciation of the offer and clearly state that you intend to accept the job. In the middle paragraph you should list the terms and conditions of employment and state that you agree with them. The purpose of this is to avoid any misunderstandings about the terms. In the closing paragraph, you should mention the date that you will be starting and indicate that you look forward to working with the organization.

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE--EXAMPLE

1 Sleepy Lane,
Anytown, Prov.,
A1B 2C3
1 April 198_

Ms. Ransom,
Personnel Manager,
XYZ Company, Inc.,
1 Busy Street
Anytown Prov.
D4E 5F6

Dear Ms. Ransom:

Thank you for your offer of the position of statistical clerk. I accept the position with pleasure.

I understand that my starting salary will be $9,500 paid in equal monthly installments with a salary review at the end of my six-month probationary period.

As we agreed, my starting date will be 15 April 1980. I enjoyed my meeting with you and look forward with anticipation to joining your company.

Yours sincerely,

Kamal Nesrallah

LETTERS OF REFUSAL

As with the acceptance, you may refuse either verbally or in writing. Many people, however, find it difficult to refuse politely in speech because they are nervous. If this describes you, write instead of phoning. This is much more acceptable than doing nothing and hoping that the problem will go away.

As always, the standard rules of letter-writing apply. As for contents, in the opening paragraph you should express your appreciation of the offer. Then you should clearly refuse the offer with thanks. In the middle paragraph you should give a brief explanation of the reasons for your refusal. You should be honest about your reasons, but you should be polite. Even if you think the salary offer or the conditions were insulting, you will harm only yourself by refusing rudely. You never know when another job with the same company might come up. and you don't want to be remembered with hostility. In the closing paragraph, you should express regret that you feel unable to accept the offer.

LETTER OF REFUSAL--EXAMPLE

1 Sleepy Hollow,
Anytown, Prov.,
A1B 2C3
1 April 1980

Ms. Ransom,
Personnel Manager,
XYZ Company, Inc.,
1 Busy Street,
Anytown, Province
D4E 5F6

Dear Ms. Ransom:

Thank you for offering me the position of statistical clerk with your organization. Unfortunately, I must regretfully decline your offer.

After careful consideration, I have decided that the salary offer of $6,500 per year is not in keeping with my skills and qualifications. I will, therefore, be looking for something that falls into my expected salary range.

Please accept my appreciation for the time you spent talking with me. I wish you success in finding a suitable candidate.

Yours sincerely,

Kamal Nesrallah

LETTERS OF NEGOTIATION

You may receive an offer that appeals to you in some ways, but contains factors that are unacceptable. Rather than rejecting the offer outright, as in the previous example, you may wish to negotiate improvements with the employer. Usually, the reasons for dissatisfaction are financial. However, any condition of employment is open for negotiation.

Before deciding to negotiate, you must be sure in your own mind that the issue is serious enough that you would be unwilling to take the job unless it were changed. The reason for this is that the employer is just as likely to tell you to forget it as to negotiate with you. Sometimes the employer can't negotiate. For example, if the organization is unionized, the earnings, benefits and working conditions are controlled by the union agreement. The employer has no latitude to change the terms. Even without a union, the employer may decide that there are other candidates who are just as suitable as you whom s/he believes would be willing to take the job as offered. The employer has no reason to negotiate. If you really want the job, you will have lost if these things happen. You can and should try to couch your negotiations in positive language, but even then you risk losing the job. Therefore, be certain that you are prepared to lose out altogether.

It usually works best to conduct your negotiations in writing. This gives you the chance to word your remarks carefully without getting flustered. It gives the employer a chance to cool off after his/her initial reaction, think about your proposals, talk your ideas over with others in the organization and come up with a counter offer. This avoids an instant refusal on the part of the employer that would make it impossible to continue discussions. However, since you will want to speak to the employer directly, suggest a date for a meeting in your letter.

In the opening paragraph of your letter, you should begin by expressing your appreciation for the offer. In the second sentence, suggest that you are very interested in the offer but that you would like to make some changes to it before accepting. In the middle paragraph, you should name the issues that are causing you concern and make your suggestions for change. In closing, you should state that you are confident that a mutually satisfactory arrangement can be arrived at. You should also request a personal meeting to discuss the issues and suggest a date.

The tone of your letter is very important. You should try for a positive, matter-of-fact approach. There is a delicate balance to be drawn; you want to show your real interest in the job, but you must be firm in expressing your reservations.

1 Sleepy Lane,
Anytown, Prov.,
A1B 2C3
1 April, 1980.

Ms. Ransom,
Personnel Manager,
XYZ Company, Inc.,
1 Busy Street,
Anytown, Prov.
D4E 5F6

Dear Ms. Ransom:

Thank you for your offer of the position of statistical clerk. As I said during our meeting, yours is the company I am most interested in working for. I would be happy to accept your offer if we could agree on the following modification.

You are offering a starting salary of $9,500 per year. As we discussed, based on my qualifications and experience, I am looking for a starting salary in the range of $10,000 to $12,000. I would like to explore the possibility of raising the starting offer to $10,500.

I am confident that we will be able to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of this issue. May I call you Wednesday morning to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter in more detail? Thank you for your offer. I look forward to our next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Kamal Nesrallah

LETTERS REQUESTING FURTHER TIME

There may be occasions on which you need more time than you have been given before making your decision. For example, you may receive one offer before hearing the final results of a competition that you would prefer to take. You don't want to turn down a sure thing, but you feel the other job is definitely preferable. Some people deal with this situation by accepting the first offer, only to change their minds in the next few days when the better job comes through. This is unacceptable behavior. If the second employer discovers what you've done, it will certainly cast a shadow over your reputation. And you can be sure that the first company will be very unhappy and will remember your name with annoyance.

A much better way to deal with this type of situation is to request more time in which to make your decision. You can do this either in writing or verbally, depending on which you feel most comfortable with. When making your request, specify the date by which you will make your decision and explain briefly the reasons for your delay. In practically every case, you will be granted an extension. It may even encourage the first company to make you a better offer.

In the opening paragraph of your letter you should express your appreciation of the offer. In the second sentence, politely request an extension to the deadline decision date. In the middle paragraph, you should explain honestly the reasons for your delay. In closing, specify the date by which you will make your decision and thank the employer for his/her patience.

Unless you need quite a long extension, you may be able to avoid requesting more time simply by not answering until you have the information you need to help you decide.

Usually, you can wait about one week. After that you really must respond. Of course, if you still need more time you can ask for it at this point.

1 Sleepy Lane,
Anytown, Province
A4B 2C3
1 April 198_.

Ms. Ransom,
Personnel Manager,
XYZ Company, Inc.,
1 Busy Street
Anytown, Province
A4B 2C3

Dear Ms. Ransom:

I was most pleased to receive your letter offering me the position of statistical clerk with your organization. I would appreciate your giving me an additional week in which to make my decision.

Although I'm very interested in the position you offer, I am waiting to hear the results of another competition before I make my final decision. I expect to know by 8 April.

Once again, I thank you for the offer. I will inform you of my decision by Monday, 8 April. I hope this is agreeable to you and thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Kamal Nesrallah

(c) CLOSING THE JOB SEARCH CAMPAIGN

Once you have accepted a job, you still have a few housekeeping chores to take care of. You should notify all the employment agencies where you are registered and ask them to remove your file. You should inform all companies with whom you have reached the interview stage that you are no

longer available. For this process, it is acceptable to use a form letter. Basically, your letter should thank the organization for considering your application and ask that your name be removed from the competition.

You should let all your personal contacts know the successful results of your search. If they have taken the time and trouble to help you, you owe them the courtesy of telling them the results. If you neglect this, you may find them much less keen to help you the next time you are looking for a job.

As a final stage, you should store away all your job search forms and files. Don't give them away or throw them out. They will come in handy the next time you are looking for a job. In this day and age, it is extremely likely that you will change jobs within the next five years. Rather than having to start your search from scratch, you will have valuable resource materials available, if you save your files from this time.